

THE
WORKS
OF
RICHARD SAVAGE, Esq.
SON OF
THE EARL RIVERS.
IN TWO VOLUMES.

THE
WORKS
OF
RICHARD H. STAGG, Esq.



THE EARL RIVERS

IN TWO VOLUMES

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OF
RICHARD SAVAGE, Esq.
SON OF
THE EARL RIVERS.
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE
LIFE AND WRITINGS OF THE AUTHOR,
BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.
A NEW EDITION.
VOL. I.



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W O R S
RICHARD SAVAGE ESQ



THOMAS HARRIS, Esq.

PATENTEE OF THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

S I R,

I BEG leave to inscribe to You, the writings of Mr. RICHARD SAVAGE, an author whose early love of the Drama, not the bitterest calamities could

DEDICATION.

could depress. His genius and misfortunes have heretofore gained him the protection of a predecessor of yours in the direction of the theatre—Sir RICHARD STEELE, who, like Mr. HARRIS, possessed an uncommon share of benevolence. He acted as You would have done: he promoted his interest with the utmost zeal, related his misfortunes, extolled his merit, and took all opportunities of recommending him. The unfortunate SAVAGE, in return, would have joined with others in acknowledging Your worth and merit, in directing the most rational entertainment of an enlightened people.

DEDICATION.

people. It requires no common exertion of spirit, activity and abilities to be competitor for the *public favour*, with a theatre directed by the greatest dramatic genius our country could ever boast: one assistance You share with that Manager, the advice of a numerous group of NEWS-PAPER WITS and CRITICS, those infallible judges of *every* art and science; who, with a *candour and kindness* peculiar to *themselves*, seize every opportunity to mark the most *minute* mistake of manager and actor. If Your feelings and doubts should make You reject the advice of such eminent writers (who have

DEDICATION.

have frequently had the greatest lawyers for their commentators) I trust You will continue to receive, what I know You ardently wish—the approbation of the Public.

I am, SIR,

Your obliged Friend,

THE EDITOR.

D R. J O H N S O N ' S

L I F E

O F T H E

A U T H O R.

VOL. I.

D. R. JOHNSON'S

L. I. F. E.

OF THE

A. R. T. H. O. R.

Vol. I.

L I F E
O F T H E
A U T H O R.

IT has been observed in all ages, that the advantages of nature or of fortune have contributed very little to the promotion of happiness; and that those whom the splendor of their rank, or the extent of their capacity, have placed upon the summits of human life, have not often given any just occasion to envy in those who look up to them from a lower station. Whether it be that apparent superiority incites great designs, and great designs are naturally liable to fatal miscarriages; or that the general lot of mankind is misery, and the misfortunes of those whose eminence drew upon them an universal attention, have been more carefully recorded, because they were more generally observed, and have in reality been only more conspicuous than those of others, not more frequent, or more severe.

That affluence and power, advantages extrinsic and adventitious, and therefore easily separable from those by whom they are possessed, should very often flatter the mind with expectations of felicity which they cannot give, raises no astonishment: but it seems rational to hope, that intellectual greatness should produce better effects; that minds qualified for great attainments should first endeavour their own benefit; and that they who are most able to reach others the way to happiness, should with most certainty follow it themselves.

But this expectation, however plausible, has been very frequently disappointed. The heroes of literary as well as civil history have been very often no less remarkable for what they have suffered, than for what they have atchieved; and volumes have been written only to enumerate the miseries of the learned, and relate their unhappy lives, and untimely deaths.

To these mournful narratives, I am about to add the Life of Richard Savage, a man whose writings intitle him to an eminent rank in the classes of learning, and whose misfortunes claim a degree of compassion, not always due to the unhappy, as they were often the consequences of the crimes of others, rather than his own.

In the year 1697, Anne Countess of Macclesfield, having lived for some time upon very uneasy terms with her husband, thought a public confession of adultery the most obvious and expeditious method of obtaining her liberty; and therefore declared, that the child, with which she was then great, was begotten by the Earl Rivers. This, as may be easily imagined, made her husband no less desirous of a separation than herself, and he prosecuted his design in the most effectual manner; for he applied not to the ecclesiastical courts for a divorce, but to the parliament for an act, by which his marriage might be dissolved, the nuptial contract totally annulled, and the children of his wife illegitimated. This act, after the usual deliberation, he obtained, tho' without the approbation of some, who considered marriage as an affair only cognizable by ecclesiastical judges*; and on March 3d was separated from his wife,

* This year was made remarkable by the dissolution of a marriage solemnized in the face of the church. SALMON'S REVIEW.

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wife, whose fortune, which was very great, was repaid her; and who having, as well as her husband, the liberty of making another choice, was in a short time married to Colonel Bret.

While the Earl of Macclesfield was prosecuting this affair, his wife was, on the 10th of January 1697-8, delivered of a son, and the Earl Rivers, by appearing to consider him as his own, left none any reason to doubt of the sincerity of her declaration; for he was his godfather, and gave him his own name, which was by his direction inserted in the register of St. Andrew's parish in Holborn, but unfortunately left him to the care of his mother, whom, as she was now set free from her husband, he probably imagined likely to treat with great tenderness the child that had contributed to so pleasing an event. It is not indeed easy to discover what motives could be found to overbalance that natural affection of a parent, or what interest could be promoted by neglect or cruelty. The dread of shame or of poverty, by which some wretches have been incited to abandon or to murder their children, cannot be supposed to have affected a woman who had proclaimed her crime, and solicited reproach, and on whom the clemency of the legislature had undeservedly bestowed a fortune, which would have been very little diminished by the expences which

The following protest is registered in the books of the House of Lords.

- Dissentient.

Because we conceive that this is the first bill of that nature that hath passed, where there was not a divorce first obtained in the Spiritual Court; which we look upon as an ill precedent, and may be of dangerous consequence in the future.

HALIFAX.

ROCHESTER.

the care of her child could have brought upon her. It was therefore not likely that she would be wicked without temptation, that she would look upon her son from his birth with a kind of resentment and abhorrence; and instead of supporting, assisting, and defending him, delight to see him struggling with misery, or that she would take every opportunity of aggravating his misfortunes, and obstructing his resources, and with an implacable and restless cruelty continue her persecution from the first hour of his life to the last.

But whatever were her motives, no sooner was her son born, than she discovered a resolution of disowning him; and in a very short time removed him from her sight, by committing him to the care of a poor woman, whom she directed to educate him as her own, and enjoined never to inform him of his true parents.

Such was the beginning of the life of Richard Savage: Born with a legal claim to honour and to affluence, he was in two months illegitimated by the parliament, and disowned by his mother, doomed to poverty and obscurity, and launched upon the ocean of life, only that he might be swallowed by its quicksands, or dashed upon its rocks.

His mother could not indeed infect others with the same cruelty. As it was impossible to avoid the inquiries which the curiosity or tenderness of her relations made after her child, she was obliged to give some account of the measures that she had taken; and her mother, the Lady Mason, whether in approbation of her design, or to prevent more criminal contrivances, engaged to transact with the nurse, to pay her for her care, and to superintend the education of the child.

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In this charitable office she was assisted by his godmother Mrs. Loyd, who, while she lived, always looked upon him with that tenderness, which the barbarity of his mother made peculiarly necessary; but her death, which happened in his tenth year, was another of the misfortunes of his childhood: for though she kindly endeavoured to alleviate his loss by a legacy of three hundred pounds, yet, as he had none to prosecute his claim, to shelter him from oppression, or call in law to the assistance of justice, her will was eluded by the executors, and no part of the money was ever paid.

He was however not yet wholly abandoned. The Lady Mason still continued her care, and directed him to be placed at a small grammar-school near St. Alban's, where he was called by the name of his nurse, without the least intimation that he had a claim to any other.

Here he was initiated in literature, and passed through several of the classes, with what rapidity or what applause cannot now be known. As he always spoke with respect of his master, it is probable that the mean rank, in which he then appeared, did not hinder his genius from being distinguished, or his industry from being rewarded; and if in so low a state he obtained distinction and rewards, it is not likely that they were gained but by genius and industry.

It is very reasonable to conjecture, that his application was equal to his abilities, because his improvement was more than proportioned to the opportunities which he enjoyed; nor can it be doubted, that if his earliest productions had been preserved, like those of happier students, we might in some have found vigorous sallies of that sprightly humour,

which distinguishes THE AUTHOR TO BE LET, and in others, strong touches of that ardent imagination which painted the solemn scenes of THE WANDERER.

While he was thus cultivating his genius, his father the Earl Rivers was seized with a distemper, which in a short time put an end to his life. He had frequently inquired after his son, and had always been amused with fallacious and evasive answers; but being now in his own opinion on his death-bed, he thought it his duty to provide for him among his other natural children, and therefore demanded a positive account of him, with an importunity not to be diverted or denied. His mother, who could no longer refuse an answer, determined at least to give such as should cut him off for ever from that happiness which competence affords, and therefore declared that he was dead; which is perhaps the first instance of a lie invented by a mother to deprive her son of a provision which was designed him by another, and which she could not expect herself, though he should lose it.

This was therefore an act of wickedness which could not be defeated, because it could not be suspected; the Earl did not imagine, that there could exist in a human form a mother that would ruin her son without enriching herself, and therefore bestowed upon some other person six thousand pounds, which he had in his will bequeathed to Savage.

The same cruelty which incited his mother to intercept this provision which had been intended him, prompted her in a short time to another project, a project worthy of such a disposition. She endeavoured to rid herself from the danger of being

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at any time made known to him, by sending him secretly to the American plantations *.

By whose kindness this scheme was counteracted, or by what interposition she was induced to lay aside her design, I know not; it is not improbable that the Lady Mason might persuade or compel her to desist, or perhaps she could not easily find accomplices wicked enough to concur in so cruel an action; for it may be conceived, that those who had by a long gradation of guilt hardened their hearts against the sense of common wickedness, would yet be shocked at the design of a mother to expose her son to slavery and want, to expose him without interest, and without provocation; and Savage might on this occasion find protectors and advocates among those who had long traded in crimes, and whom compassion had never touched before.

Being hindered, by whatever means, from banishing him into another country, she formed soon after a scheme for burying him in poverty and obscurity in his own; and that his station of life, if not the place of his residence, might keep him for ever at a distance from her, she ordered him to be placed with a shoemaker in Holborn, that after the usual time of trial, he might become his apprentice †.

It is generally reported, that this project was for some time successful, and that Savage was employed at the awl longer than he was willing to confess; nor was it perhaps any great advantage to him, that an unexpected discovery determined him to quit his occupation.

* Savage's Preface to his Miscellany.

† Preface to Savage's Miscellanies.

About this time his nurse, who had always treated him as her own son, died; and it was natural for him to care of those effects, which by her death were, as he imagined, become his own; he therefore went to her house, opened her boxes, and examined her papers, among which he found some letters written to her by the Lady Mason, which informed him of his birth, and the reasons for which it was concealed.

He was now no longer satisfied with the employment which had been allotted him, but thought he had a right to share the affluence of his mother, and therefore without scruple applied to her as her son, and made use of every art to awaken her tenderness, and attract her regard. But neither his letters, nor the interposition of those friends which his merit or his distress procured him, made any impression upon her mind: She still resolved to neglect, though she could no longer disown him.

It was to no purpose that he frequently solicited her to admit him to see her; she avoided him with the most vigilant precaution, and ordered him to be excluded from her house, by whomsoever he might be introduced, and what reason soever he might give for entering it.

Savage was at the same time so touched with the discovery of his real mother, that it was his frequent practice to walk in the dark evenings * for several hours before her door, in hopes of seeing her as she might come by accident to the window, or cross her apartment with a candle in her hand.

But all his assiduity and tenderness were without effect, for he could neither soften her heart, nor

* PLAIN DEALER. See Appendix.

open her hand, and was reduced to the utmost miseries of want, while he was endeavouring to awaken the affection of a mother : He was therefore obliged to seek some other means of support, and having no profession, became, by necessity, an author.

At this time the attention of all the literary world was engrossed by the Bangorian controversy, which filled the press with pamphlets, and the coffee-houses with disputants. Of this subject, as most popular, he made choice for his first attempt, and without any other knowledge of the question, than he had casually collected from conversation, published a poem against the bishop.

What was the success or merit of this performance I know not ; it was probably lost among the innumerable pamphlets to which that dispute gave occasion. Mr. Savage wate himself in a little time ashamed of it, and endeavoured to suppress it, by destroying all the copies he could collect.

He then attempted a more gainful kind of writing *, and, in his eighteenth year offered to the stage a comedy borrowed from a Spanish plot, which was refused by the players, and was therefore given by him to Mr. Bullock, who, having more interest, made some slight alterations, and brought it upon the stage, under the title of † WOMAN'S A RIDDLE, but allowed the unhappy author no part of the profit.

Not discouraged however at his repulse, he wrote two years afterwards LOVE IN A VEIL, another comedy, borrowed likewise from the Spanish, but

* Jacob's Lives of Dramatic Poets.

† This play was printed first in 8vo. and afterwards in 12mo. the fifth edition.

with little better success than before ; for though it was received and acted, yet it appeared so late in the year, that the author obtained no other advantage from it, than the acquaintance of Sir Richard Steele, and Mr. Wilks ; by whom he was pitied, caressed, and relieved.

Sir Richard Steele having declared in his favour with all the ardour of benevolence which constituted his character, promoted his interest with the utmost zeal, related his misfortunes, applauded his merit, took all opportunities of recommending him, and asserted, * that ' the inhumanity of his mother had ' given him a right to find every good man his father.'

Nor was Mr. Savage admitted to his acquaintance only, but to his confidence, of which he sometimes related an instance too extraordinary to be omitted, as it affords a very just idea of his patron's character.

He was once desired by Sir Richard, with an air of the utmost importance, to come very early to his house the next morning. Mr. Savage came as he had promised, found the chariot at the door, and Sir Richard waiting for him, and ready to go out. What was intended, and whither they were to go, Savage could not conjecture, and was not willing to enquire ; but immediately seated himself with Sir Richard ; the coachman was ordered to drive, and they hurried with the utmost expedition to Hyde-Park Corner, where they stopped at a petty tavern, and retired to a private room. Sir Richard then informed him, that he intended to publish a pamphlet, and that he had desired him to come thither that he might write for him. They soon sat

* PLAIN DEALER:

down to the work. Sir Richard dictated, and Savage wrote, till the dinner that had been ordered was put upon the table. Savage was surprized at the meanness of the entertainment, and after some hesitation ventured to ask for wine, which Sir Richard, not without reluctance, ordered to be brought. They then finished their dinner, and proceeded in their pamphlet, which they concluded in the afternoon.

Mr. Savage then imagined his task over, and expected that Sir Richard would call for the reckoning, and return home : but his expectations deceived him, for Sir Richard told him, that he was without money, and that the pamphlet must be sold before the dinner could be paid for ; and Savage was therefore obliged to go and offer their new production to sale for two guineas, which with some difficulty he obtained. Sir Richard then returned home, having retired that day only to avoid his creditors, and composed the pamphlet only to discharge his reckoning.

Mr. Savage related another fact equally uncommon, which, though it has no relation to his life, ought to be preserved. Sir Richard Steele having one day invited to his house a great number of persons of the first quality, they were surprized at the number of liveries which surrounded the table ; and after dinner, when wine and mirth had set them free from the observation of rigid ceremony, one of them enquired of Sir Richard, how such an expensive train of domestics could be consistent with his fortune. Sir Richard very frankly confessed, that they were fellows of whom he would very willingly be rid. And being then asked, why he did not discharge them, declared that they were bailiffs who had

had introduced themselves with an execution, and whom, since he could not send them away, he had thought it convenient to embellish with liveries, that they might do him credit while they staid.

His friends were diverted with the expedient, and by paying the debt discharged their attendance, having obliged Sir Richard to promise that they should never again find him graced with a retinue of the same kind.

Under such a tutor, Mr. Savage was not likely to learn prudence or frugality, and perhaps many of the misfortunes which the want of those virtues brought upon him in the following parts of his life, might be justly imputed to so unimproving an example.

Nor did the kindness of Sir Richard end in common favours. He proposed to have established him in some settled scheme of life, and to have contracted a kind of alliance with him, by marrying him to a natural daughter, on whom he intended to bestow a thousand pounds. But though he was always lavish of future bounties, he conducted his affairs in such a manner, that he was very seldom able to keep his promises, or execute his own intentions; and as he was never able to raise the sum which he had offered, the marriage was delayed. In the mean time he was officiously informed that Mr. Savage had ridiculed him; by which he was so much exasperated, that he withdrew the allowance which he had paid him, and never afterwards admitted him to his house.

It is not indeed unlikely that Savage might by his imprudence expose himself to the malice of a tale-bearer; for his patron had many follies, which as his discernment easily discovered, his imagination might

might sometimes incite him to mention too ludicrously. A little knowledge of the world is sufficient to discover that such weakness is very common, and that there are few who do not sometimes, in the wantonness of thoughtless mirth, or the heat of transient resentment, speak of their friends and benefactors with levity and contempt, though in their cooler moments they want neither sense of their kindness, nor reverence for their virtue. The fault therefore of Mr. Savage was rather negligence than ingratitude; but Sir Richard must likewise be acquitted of severity, for who is there that can patiently bear contempt from one whom he has relieved and supported, whose establishment he has laboured, and whose interest he has promoted?

He was now again abandoned to fortune, without any other friend than Mr. Wilks; a man, who, whatever were his abilities or skill as an actor, deserves at least to be remembered for his virtues*, which

* As it is a loss to mankind when any good action is forgotten, I shall insert another instance of Mr. Wilks's generosity very little known. Mr. Smith, a gentleman educated at Dublin, being hindered by an impediment in his pronunciation from engaging in orders, for which his friends designed him, left his own country, and came to London in quest of employment, but found his solicitations fruitless, and his necessities every day more pressing. In this distress he wrote a tragedy, and offered it to the players, by whom it was rejected. Thus were his last hopes defeated, and he had no other prospect than of the most deplorable poverty. But Mr. Wilks thought his performance, though not perfect, at least worthy of some reward, and therefore offered him a benefit. This favour he improved with so much diligence, that the house afforded him a considerable sum, with which he went to Leyden, applied himself to the study of physic, and prosecuted his design with so much diligence and success, that when Dr. Boerhaave was desired by the Czarina to recommend proper persons to introduce into Russia the practice and

which are not often to be found in the world, and perhaps less often in his profession than in others. To be humane, generous and candid, is a very high degree of merit in any case; but those qualities deserve still greater praise, when they are found in that condition, which makes almost every other man, for whatever reason, contemptuous, insolent, petulant, selfish, and brutal.

As Mr. Wilks was one of those to whom calamity seldom complained without relief, he naturally took an unfortunate wit into his protection, and not only assisted him in any casual distresses, but continued an equal and steady kindness to the time of his death.

By his interposition Mr. Savage once obtained from his mother * fifty pounds, and a promise of one hundred and fifty more; but it was the fate of this unhappy man, that few promises of any advantage to him were performed. His mother was infected among others with the general madness of the South-Sea traffic, and having been disappointed in her expectations, refused to pay what perhaps nothing but the prospect of sudden affluence prompted her to promise.

Being thus obliged to depend upon the friendship of Mr. Wilks, he was consequently an assiduous frequenter of the theatres, and in a short time the amusements of the stage took such possession of his mind, that he never was absent from a play in several years.

and study of physic, Dr. Smith was one of those whom he selected. He had a considerable pension settled on him at his arrival, and was one of the chief physicians at the Russian court.

* This I write upon the credit of the author of his life, which was published 1727.

This

This constant attendance naturally procured him the acquaintance of the players, and among others, of Mrs. Oldfield, who was so much pleased with his conversation, and touched with his misfortunes, that she allowed him a settled pension of fifty pounds a year, which was during her life regularly paid.

That this act of generosity may receive its due praise, and that the good actions of Mrs. Oldfield may not be sullied by her general character, it is proper to mention what Mr. Savage often declared in the strongest terms, that he never saw her alone, or in any other place than behind the scenes.

At her death he endeavoured to shew his gratitude in the most decent manner, by wearing mourning as for a mother, but did not celebrate her in elegies, because he knew that too great profusion of praise would only have revived those faults which his natural equity did not allow him to think less, because they were committed by one who favoured him; but of which, though his virtue would not endeavour to palliate them, his gratitude would not suffer him to prolong the memory, or diffuse the censure.

In his *WANDERER*, he has indeed taken an opportunity of mentioning her, but celebrates her not for her virtue, but her beauty, an excellence which none ever denied her: This is the only encomium with which he has rewarded her liberality, and perhaps he has even in this been too lavish of his praise. He seems to have thought, that never to mention his benefactress would have an appearance of ingratitude, tho' to have dedicated any particular performance to her memory would have only betrayed an officious partiality, that, without exalting her character, would have depressed his own.

He had sometimes, by the kindness of Mr. Wilks, the advantage of a benefit, on which occasions he

often received uncommon marks of regard and compassion; and was once told by the Duke of Dorset, that it was just to consider him as an injured nobleman, and that in his opinion the nobility ought to think themselves obliged, without solicitation, to take every opportunity of supporting him by their countenance and patronage. But he had generally the mortification to hear that the whole interest of his mother was employed to frustrate his applications, and that she never left any expedient untried, by which he might be cut off from the possibility of supporting life. The same disposition she endeavoured to diffuse among all those over whom nature or fortune gave her any influence, and indeed succeeded too well in her design; but could not always propagate her effrontery with her cruelty, for some of those, whom she incited against him, were ashamed of their own conduct, and boasted of that relief which they never gave him.

In this censure I do not indiscriminately involve all his relations: for he has mentioned with gratitude the humanity of one Lady, whose name I am now unable to recollect, and to whom therefore I cannot pay the praises which she deserves for having acted well in opposition to influence, precept, and example.

The punishment which our laws inflict upon those parents who murder their infants is well known, nor has its justice ever been contested; but if they deserve death, who destroy a child in its birth, what pains can be severe enough for her who forbears to destroy him only to inflict sharper miseries upon him; who prolongs his life only to make it miserable; and who exposes him, without care and without pity, to the malice of oppression, the caprices of chance, and the temptations of poverty; who rejoices to see him overwhelmed with calamities;

ties; and when his own industry, or the charity of others, has enabled him to rise for a short time above his miseries, plunges him again into his former distress?

The kindness of his friends not affording him any constant supply, and the prospect of improving his fortune, by enlarging his acquaintance, necessarily leading him to places of expence, he found it necessary * to endeavour once more at dramatic poetry, for which he was now better qualified by a more extensive knowledge, and longer observation. But having been unsuccessful in comedy, though rather for want of opportunities than genius, he resolved now to try whether he should not be more fortunate in exhibiting a tragedy.

The story which he chose for the subject, was that of Sir Thomas Overbury, a story well adapted to the stage, though perhaps not far enough removed from the present age, to admit properly the fictions necessary to complete the plan; for the mind, which naturally loves truth, is always most offended with the violation of those truths of which we are most certain, and we of course conceive those facts most certain, which approach nearest to our own time.

Out of this story he formed a tragedy, which, if the circumstances in which he wrote it be considered, will afford at once an uncommon proof of strength of genius, and evenness of mind, of a serenity not to be ruffled, and an imagination not to be suppressed.

During a considerable part of the time, in which he was employed upon this performance, he was without lodging, and often without meat; nor had he any other conveniencies for study than the fields or the street allowed him; there he used to walk and form his speeches, and afterwards step into a shop, beg for a few moments the use of the pen and ink, and write

* In 1724.

down what he had composed upon paper, which he had picked up by accident.

If the performance of a writer thus distressed is not perfect, its faults ought surely to be imputed to a cause very different from want of genius, and must rather excite pity than provoke censure.

But when under these discouragements the tragedy was finished, there yet remained the labour of introducing it on the stage, an undertaking, which, to an ingenious mind, was in a very high degree vexatious and disgusting; for having little interest or reputation, he was obliged to submit himself wholly to the players, and admit, with whatever reluctance, the emendations of Mr. Cibber, which he always considered as the disgrace of his performance.

He had indeed in Mr. Hill another critic of a very different class, from whose friendship he received great assistance on many occasions, and whom he never mentioned but with the utmost tenderness and regard *. He had been for some time distinguished by him with very particular kindness, and on this occasion it was natural to apply to him as an author of an established character. He therefore sent this tragedy to him, with a short copy of † verses, in which he desired his correction. Mr. Hill, whose humanity and politeness are generally known, readily complied with his request; but as he is remarkable for singularity of sentiment, and bold experiments in language, Mr. Savage did not think his play much improved by his innovation, and had even at that time the courage to reject several passages which he could not approve; and what is still more laudable, Mr. Hill had the generosity not to resent the neglect of his alterations, but wrote the ‡ prologue and epilogue, in which he

* Vol. II. p. 181.

† Ibid, p. 150.

‡ Vol. I. p. 148. 186.

touches on the circumstances of the author with great tenderness.

After all these obstructions and compliances, he was only able to bring his play upon the stage in the summer, when the chief actors had retired, and the rest were in possession of the house for their own advantage. Among these, Mr. Savage was admitted to play the part of Sir Thomas Overbury, by which he gained no great reputation, the theatre being a province for which nature seemed not to have designed him; for neither his voice, look, nor gesture, were such as are expected on the stage, and he was himself so much ashamed of having been reduced to appear as a player, that he always blotted out his name from the list, when a copy of his tragedy was to be shown to his friends.

In the publication of his performance he was more successful, for the rays of genius that glimmered in it, that glimmered through all the mists which poverty and Cibber had been able to spread over it, procured him the notice and esteem of many persons eminent for their rank, their virtue, and their wit.

Of this play, acted, printed, and dedicated, the accumulated profits arose to an hundred pounds, which he thought at that time a very large sum, having been never master of so much before.

In the dedication *, for which he received ten guineas, there is nothing remarkable. The Preface contains a very liberal encomium on the blooming excellencies of Mr. Theophilus Cibber, which Mr. Savage could not in the latter part of his life see his friends about to read without snatching the play out of their hands. The generosity of Mr. Hill did not end on this occasion; for afterwards, when Mr. Savage's necessities returned, he encouraged a sub-

* To Herbert Tryst, Esq. of Herefordshire, vol. I. p. 111.

scription to a Miscellany of Poems in a very extraordinary manner, by publishing his story in the *PLAIN DEALER* *, with some affecting lines †, which he asserts to have been written by Mr. Savage upon the

* The *PLAIN DEALER* was a periodical paper written by Mr. Hill and Mr. Bond, whom Mr. Savage called the two contending powers of light and darkness. They wrote by turns each six Essays, and the character of the work was observed regularly to rise in Mr. Hill's weeks, and fall in Mr. Bond's.

† Hopeless, abandon'd, aimless, and oppress'd,
Lost to delight, and, ev'ry way, distress'd;
Cross his cold bed, in wild disorder, thrown,
Thus sigh'd Alexis, friendless, and alone—

Why do I breathe?—What joy can being give,
When she, who gave me life; forgets I live!
Feels not these wintry blasts;—nor heeds my smart;
But shuts me from the shelter of her heart!
Saw me expos'd to want! to shame! to scorn!
To ills!—which make it misery to be born!
Cast me, regardless, on the world's bleak wild!
And bade me be a wretch, while yet a child!

Where can he hope for pity, peace, or rest,
Who moves no softness in a mother's breast?
Custom, law, reason, all! my cause forsake,
And Nature sleeps, to keep my woes awake!
Crimes, which the cruel scarce believe can be,
The kind are guilty of, to ruin me.
E'en she, who bore me, blasts me with her hate,
And, meant my fortune, makes herself my fate.

Yet has this sweet neglecter of my woes,
The softest, tend'rest breast that pity knows!
Her eyes shed mercy wheresoe'er they shine,
And her soul melts at ev'ry woe—but mine.
Sure then some secret fate for guilt unwill'd,
Some sentence preordain'd to be fulfill'd!
Plung'd me thus deep in sorrow's searching flood,
And wash'd me from the mem'ry of her blood.

But, oh! whatever cause has mov'd her hate,
Let me but sigh, in silence, at my fate;
The God within perhaps may touch her breast,
And, when she pities, who can be distress'd?

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the treatment received by him from his mother, but of which he was himself the author, as Mr. Savage afterwards declared. These lines, and the paper in which they were inserted, had a very powerful effect upon all but his mother, whom, by making her cruelty more public, they only hardened in her aversion.

Mr. Hill not only promoted the subscription to the Miscellany, but furnished likewise the greatest part of the Poems of which it is composed, and particularly *THE HAPPY MAN*, which he published as a specimen.

The subscriptions of those whom these papers should influence to patronise merit in distress, without any other solicitation, were directed to be left at Button's coffee-house; and Mr. Savage going thither a few days afterwards, without expectation of any effect from his proposal, found to his surprize seventy guineas *, which had been sent him in consequence of the compassion excited by Mr. Hill's pathetic representation.

To this Miscellany he wrote a preface †, in which
he

* The names of those who so generously contributed to his relief, having been mentioned in a former account, ought not to be omitted here. They were the Dutchess of Cleveland, Lady Cheyney, Lady Castlemain, Lady Gower, Lady Lechmere, the Dutchess Dowager, and Dutchess of Rutland, Lady Strafford, the Countess Dowager of Warwick, Mrs. Mary Floyer, Mrs. Sosuel Noel, Duke of Rutland, Lord Gainsborough, Lord Milington, Mr. John Savage.

† This Preface is as follows :

Crudelis Mater magis, an Puer improbus ille ?

Improbus ille Puer, crudelis tu quoque Mater. VIRO.

My readers, I am afraid, when they observe Richard Savage joined so close, and so constantly, to 'son of the late Earl Rivers,' will impute to a ridiculous vanity, what is the effect of an unhappy necessity, which my hard fortune has thrown me under—I am to be pardoned for adhering a little tenaciously to my father,

ther,

he gives an account of his mother's cruelty in a very uncommon strain of humour, and with a gaiety of ima-

ther, because my mother will allow me to be no-body ; and has almost reduced me, among heavier afflictions, to that uncommon kind of want, which the Indians of America complained of at our first settling among them ; when they came to beg names of the English, because (said they) we are poor men of ourselves, and have none we can lay claim to.

The goodnature of those, to whom I have not the honour to be known, would forgive me the ludicrous turn of this beginning, if they knew but how little reason I have to be merry.—It was my misfortune to be son of the above-mentioned Earl, by the late Countess of Macclesfield, (now widow of Colonel Henry Bret) whose divorce, on occasion of the amour which I was a consequence of, has left something on record, which I take to be very remarkable ; and it is this : Certain of our great judges, in their temporal decisions, act with a spiritual regard to Levitical Divinity, and in particular to the Ten Commandments ; two of which seem, in my case, to have visibly influenced their opinions—‘ Thou shalt not commit adultery,’ pointed fullest on my mother ; ‘ But, as to ‘ The Lord’s visiting the sins of the fathers ‘ upon the children,’ it was considered as what could regard me only : And for that reason, I suppose, it had been inconsistent with the rules of sanctity, to assign provision out of my mother’s return’d estate, for support of an infant sinner.

Thus, while legally the son of one Earl, and naturally of another, I am, nominally, no-body’s son at all : For the Lady having given me too much father, thought it but an equivalent deduction to leave me no mother, by way of balance---So I am sported into the world, a kind of shuttlecock, between law and nature---If law had not beaten me back, by the stroke of an act, on purpose, I had not been above wit, by the privilege of a man of quality : Nay, I might have preserved into the bargain, the Lives of Duke Hamilton and Lord Mohun, whose dispute arose from the estate of that Earl of Macclesfield, whom (but for the mentioned act) I must have called father---And, if nature had not struck me off, with a stranger blow than law did, the other Earl, who was most emphatically my father, could never have been told, I was dead, when he was about to enable me, by his will, to have lived to some purpose. An unaccountable severity of a mother ! whom I was then not old enough to have deserved it from ; and by which I am a single unhappy instance among
that

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imagination, which the success of his subscription probably produced.

The

that nobleman's natural children, and thrown friendless on the world without means of supporting myself, and without authority to apply to those, whose duty I know it is to support me.

Thus, however ill qualified I am to live by my wits, I have the best plea in the world for attempting it; since it is too apparent that I was born to it.---Having wearied my judgment with fruitless endeavours to be happy, I gave the reins to my fancy, that I might learn, at least, to be easy.

But I cease a while to speak of myself, that I may say something of my miscellany.---I was furnished, by the verses of my friends, with wit enough to deserve a subscription; but I wanted another much more profitable quality, which should have emboldened me to solicit it (another of my wants, that, I hope, may be imputed to my mother!) I had met with little encouragement, but for the endeavours of some few gentlemen in my behalf, who were generous enough to consider my ill fortune, as a merit that intitled me to their notice.

Among these I am particularly indebted to the author of the *PLAIN DEALERS*, who was pleased, in two of his papers (which I intreat his pardon for reprinting before my *Miscellany*) to point out my unhappy story to the world with so touching a humanity, and so good an effect, that many persons of quality, of all ranks, and of both sexes, distinguished themselves with the promptness he had hinted to the noble-minded; and not staying till they were applied to, sent me the honour of their subscriptions in the most liberal and handsome manner for encouragement of my undertaking.

I ought here to acknowledge several favours from Mr. Hill, whose writings are a shining ornament of this *Miscellany*; but I wave detaining my readers, and beg leave to refer them to a copy of verses called *THE FRIEND* *, which I have taken the liberty to address to that gentleman.

To return to the Lady, my mother---Had the celebrated Mr. Locke been acquainted with her example, it had certainly appeared in his chapter against innate practical principles; because it would have completed his instances of enormities: Some of which, though not exactly in the order that he mentions them, are as follow---‘ Have there not been (says he) whole nations,
‘ and

* Vol. II. p. 181. .

The Dedication is addressed to the Lady Mary Wortley Montague, whom he flatters without reserve,

'and those of the most civilized people, amongst whom, the
'exposing their children to perish by want, or wild beasts, has
'been a practice as little condemned or scrupled as the begetting
'them?' Were I inclinable to be serious, I could easily prove
that I have not been more gently dealt with by Mrs. Bret; but if
this is any way foreign to my case, I shall find a nearer example
in the whimsical one that ensues.

'It is familiar (says the afore-cited author) among the Men-
'grelians, a people professing Christianity, to bury their children
'alive without scruple'—There are indeed sundry sects of Chris-
tians, and I have often wondered which could be my mamma's,
but now I find she piously professes and practises Christianity
after the manner of the Mengrelians; she industriously obscured
me, when my fortune depended on my being known, and, in that
sense she may be said to have buried me alive; and sure, like a
Mengrelian, she must have committed the action without scruple;
for she is a woman of spirit, and can see the consequence without
remorse—'The Caribees (continues my author) were wont to
'castrate their children, in order to fat and eat them'—Here in-
deed I can draw no parallel; for to speak justice of the Lady, she
never contributed ought to have me pampered, but always promo-
ted my being starved: Nor did she, even in my infancy, betray
fondness enough to be suspected of a design to devour me; but, on
the contrary, not enduring me ever to approach her, offered a
bribe to have me slipped off, in an odd manner, to one of the
plantations—When I was about fifteen her affection began to
awake, and had I but known my interest, I had been handsomely
provided for. In short, I was solicited to be bound apprentice to a
very honest and reputable occupation—a shoemaker; an offer
which I undutifully rejected. I was, in fine, unwilling to under-
stand her in a literal sense, and hoped, that, like the prophets of
old, she might have hinted her mind in a kind of parable, or pro-
verbial way of speaking; as thus—That one time or other I
might, on due application, have the honour of taking the length
of her foot.

Mr. Locke mentions another set of people that dispatch their
children, if a pretended astrologer declares them to have unhap-
py stars—Perhaps my mamma has procured some cunning man to
calculate my nativity; or having had some ominous dream, which
preceded

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serve, and, to confess the truth, with very little * art. The same observation may be extended to all his Dedications: his compliments are constrained and violent, heaped together without the grace of order, or the decency of introduction: he seems to have written his Panegyrics for the perusal only of his patrons, and to have imagined that he had no other task than to pamper them with praises however gross, and that flattery would make its way to the heart, without the assistance of elegance or invention.

Soon afterwards the death of the king furnished a general subject for a poetical contest, in which Mr. Savage engaged, and is allowed to have carried the prize of honour from his competitors; but I know not whether he gained by his performance any other advantage than the increase of his reputation; though it must certainly have been with farther views that he prevailed

preceded my birth, the dire event may have appeared to her in the dark and dreary bottom of a China cup, where coffee-stains are often consulted for prophecies, and held as infallible as were the leaves of the ancient Sybils—To be partly serious: I am rather willing to wrong her judgment, by suspecting it to be tainted a little with the tenets of superstition, than suppose she can be mistress of a seared conscience, and act on no principle at all.

* This the following extract from it will prove.

—‘ Since our country has been honoured with the glory of your wit, as elevated and immortal as your soul, it no longer remains a doubt whether your sex have strength of mind in proportion to their sweetness. There is something in your verses as distinguished as your air—They are as strong as truth, as deep as reason, as clear as innocence, and as smooth as beauty—They contain a nameless and peculiar mixture of force and grace, which is at once so movingly serene, and so majestically lovely, that it is too amiable to appear any where but in your eyes and in your writings.

‘ As fortune is not more my enemy than I am the enemy of flattery, I know not how I can forbear this application to your Ladyship, because there is scarce a possibility that I should say more than I believe, when I am speaking of your Excellence.’—

prevailed upon himself to attempt a species of writing, of which all the topics had been long before exhausted, and which was made at once difficult by the multitudes that had failed in it, and those that had succeeded.

He was now advancing in reputation, and though frequently involved in very distressful perplexities, appeared however to be gaining upon mankind, when both his fame and his life were endangered by an event, of which it is not yet determined, whether it ought to be mentioned as a crime or a calamity.

On the 20th of November 1727, Mr. Savage came from Richmond, where he then lodged, that he might pursue his studies with less interruption, with an intent to discharge another lodging which he had in Westminster, and accidentally meeting two gentlemen his acquaintances, whose names were Merchant and Gregory, he went in with them to a neighbouring coffee-house, and sat drinking till it was late, it being in no time of Mr. Savage's life any part of his character to be the first of the company that desired to separate. He would willingly have gone to bed in the same house, but there was not room for the whole company, and therefore they agreed to ramble about the streets, and divert themselves with such amusements as should offer themselves till morning.

In their walk they happened unluckily to discover light in Robinson's coffee-house near Charing-cross, and therefore went in. Merchant, with some rudeness, demanded a room, and was told that there was a good fire in the next parlour, which the company were about to leave, being then paying their reckoning. Merchant, not satisfied with this answer, rushed into the room, and was followed by his companions. He then petulantly placed himself between the company and the fire, and soon after kicked down the table. This produced a quarrel, swords were drawn on both sides,

sides, and one Mr. James Sinclair was killed. Savage having wounded likewise a maid that held him, forced his way with Merchant out of the house; but being intimidated and confused, without resolution either to fly or stay, they were taken in a back court by one of the company and some soldiers, whom he had called to his assistance.

Being secured and guarded that night, they were in the morning carried before three justices, who committed them to the Gatehouse, from whence, upon the death of Mr. Sinclair, which happened the same day, they were removed in the night to Newgate, where they were however treated with some distinction, exempted from the ignominy of chains, and confined, not among the common criminals, but in the Prefecture-yard.

When the day of trial came, the court was crowded in a very unusual manner, and the public appeared to interest itself as in a cause of general concern. The witnesses against Mr. Savage and his friends were, the woman who kept the house, which was a house of ill fame, and her maid, the men who were in the room with Mr. Sinclair, and a woman of the town, who had been drinking with them, and with whom one of them had been seen in bed. They swore in general, that Merchant gave the provocation, which Savage and Gregory drew their swords to justify; that Savage drew first, and that he stabbed Sinclair when he was not in a posture of defence, or while Gregory commanded his sword; that after he had given the thrust he turned pale, and would have retired, but that the maid clung round him, and one of the company endeavoured to detain him, from whom he broke, by cutting the maid on the head, but was afterwards taken in a court.

There

There was some difference in their depositions ; one did not see Savage give the wound, another saw it given when Sinclair held his point towards the ground ; and the woman of the town asserted, that she did not see Sinclair's sword at all : This difference however was very far from amounting to inconsistency, but it was sufficient to shew, that the hurry of the dispute was such, that it was not easy to discover the truth with relation to particular circumstances, and that therefore some deductions were to be made from the credibility of the testimonies.

Sinclair had declared several times before his death, that he received his wound from Savage, nor did Savage at his trial deny the fact, but endeavoured partly to extenuate it, by urging the suddenness of the whole action, and the impossibility of any ill design, or premeditated malice, and partly to justify it by the necessity of self-defence, and the hazard of his own life, if he had lost that opportunity of giving the thrust : He observed, that neither reason nor law obliged a man to wait for the blow which was threatened, and which, if he should suffer it, he might never be able to return ; that it was always allowable to prevent an assault, and to preserve life by taking away that of the adversary, by whom it was endangered.

With regard to the violence with which he endeavoured to escape, he declared, that it was not his design to fly from justice, or decline a trial, but to avoid the expences and severities of a prison, and that he intended to have appeared at the bar without compulsion.

This defence, which took up more than an hour, was heard by the multitude that thronged the court with the most attentive and respectful silence : Those who thought he ought not to be acquitted, owned that
applause

applause could not be refused him ; and those who before pitied his misfortunes, now revered his abilities.

The witnesses which appeared against him were proved to be persons of characters which did not entitle them to much credit ; a common strumpet, a woman by whom strumpets were entertained, and a man by whom they were supported ; and the character of Savage was by several persons of distinction asserted to be that of a modest inoffensive man, not inclined to broils, or to insolence, and who had, to that time, been only known for his misfortunes and his wit.

Had his audience been his judges, he had undoubtedly been acquitted ; but Mr. Page, who was then upon the bench, treated him with his usual insolence and severity, and when he had summed up the evidence, endeavoured to exasperate the jury, as Mr. Savage used to relate it, with this eloquent harangue.

‘ Gentlemen of the jury, you are to consider that
 ‘ Mr. Savage is a very great man, a much greater
 ‘ man than you or I, gentlemen of the jury ; that he
 ‘ wears very fine clothes, much finer clothes than you
 ‘ or I, gentlemen of the jury ; that he has abundance
 ‘ of money in his pocket, much more money than
 ‘ you or I, gentlemen of the jury ; but gentlemen of
 ‘ the jury, is it not a very hard case, gentlemen of
 ‘ jury, that Mr. Savage should therefore kill you or
 ‘ me, gentlemen of the jury ?’

Mr. Savage hearing his defence thus misrepresented, and the men who were to decide his fate incited against him by invidious comparisons, resolutely asserted, that his cause was not candidly explained, and began to recapitulate what he had before said with regard to his condition, and the necessity of endeavouring to escape the expences of imprisonment ; but the judge having ordered him to be silent, and repeated his orders with-
 out

out effect, commanded that he should be taken from the bar by force.

The jury then heard the opinion of the judge, that good characters were of no weight against positive evidence, though they might turn the scale, where it was doubtful; and that though, when two men attack each other, the death of either is only manslaughter; but where one is the aggressor, as in the case before them, and in pursuance of his first attack, kills the other, the law supposes the action, however sudden, to be malicious. They then deliberated upon their verdict, and determined that Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were guilty of murder, and Mr. Merchant, who had no sword, only of manslaughter.

Thus ended this memorable trial, which lasted eight hours. Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were conducted back to prison, where they were more closely confined, and loaded with irons of fifty pounds weight: Four days afterwards they were sent back to the court to receive sentence; on which occasion Mr. Savage made, as far as it could be retained in memory, the following speech.

‘ It is now, my Lord, too late to offer any thing
‘ by way of defence or vindication; nor can we ex-
‘ pect ought from your Lordships, in this court, but
‘ the sentence which the law requires you, as judges,
‘ to pronounce against men of our calamitous condi-
‘ tion.—But we are also persuaded, that as mere
‘ men, and out of this seat of rigorous justice, you
‘ are susceptible of the tender passions, and too hu-
‘ mane, not to commiserate the unhappy situation of
‘ those, whom the law sometimes perhaps—exact—
‘ from you to pronounce upon. No doubt you dis-
‘ tinguish between offences, which arise out of pre-
‘ meditation, and a disposition habituated to vice or
‘ immorality

' immorality, and transgressions, which are the un-
 ' happy and unforeseen effects of casual absence of
 ' reason, and sudden impulse of passion: We there-
 ' fore hope you will contribute all you can to an ex-
 ' tension of that mercy, which the gentlemen of the
 ' jury have been pleased to shew Mr. Merchant, who
 ' (allowing facts as sworn against us by the evidence)
 ' has led us into this our calamity. I hope this will
 ' not be construed, as if we meant to reflect upon
 ' that gentleman, or remove any thing from us upon
 ' him, or that we repine the more at our fate, be-
 ' cause he has no participation of it: No, my Lord!
 ' For my part, I declare nothing could more soften my
 ' grief, than to be without any companion in so great
 ' a misfortune *.'

Mr. Savage had now no hopes of life, but from the mercy of the crown, which was very earnestly solicited by his friends, and which, with whatever difficulty the story may obtain belief, was obstructed only by his mother.

To prejudice the Queen against him, she made use of an incident, which was omitted in the order of time, that it might be mentioned together with the purpose which it was made to serve. Mr. Savage, when he had discovered his birth, had an incessant desire to speak to his mother, who always avoided him in public, and refused him admission into her house.

One evening walking, as it was his custom, in the street that she inhabited, he saw the door of her house by accident open; he entered it, and finding no persons in the passage to hinder him, went up stairs to salute her. She discovered him before he could enter her chamber, alarmed the family with the most distressful outcries, and when she had by her screams

* Mr. Savage's Life.

gathered them about her, ordered them to drive out of the house that villain, who had forced himself in upon her, and endeavoured to murder her. Savage, who had attempted with the most submissive tenderness to soften her rage, hearing her utter so detestable an accusation, thought it prudent to retire, and, I believe, never attempted afterwards to speak to her.

But shocked as he was with her falshood and her cruelty, he imagined that she intended no other use of her lie, than to set herself free from his embraces and solicitations, and was very far from suspecting that she would treasure it in her memory, as an instrument of future wickedness, or that she would endeavour for this fictitious assault to deprive him of his life.

But when the Queen was solicited for his pardon, and informed of the severe treatments which he had suffered from his judge, she answered, that however unjustifiable might be the manner of his trial, or whatever extenuation the action for which he was condemned might admit, she could not think that man a proper object of the King's mercy, who had been capable of entering his mother's house in the night, with an intent to murder her.

By whom this atrocious calumny had been transmitted to the Queen; whether she that invented had the front to relate it; whether she found any one weak enough to credit it, or corrupt enough to concur with her in her hateful design, I know not; but methods had been taken to persuade the Queen so strongly of the truth of it, that she for a long time refused to hear any of those who petitioned for his life.

Thus had Savage perished by the evidence of a bawd, a strumpet, and his mother, had not justice and compassion procured him an advocate of rank too great to be rejected unheard, and of virtue too
eminent

eminent to be heard without being believed. His merit and his calamities happened to reach the ear of the Countess of Hertford, who engaged in his support with all the tenderness that is excited by pity, and all the zeal which is kindled by generosity, and demanding an audience of the Queen, laid before her the whole series of his mother's cruelty, exposed the improbability of an accusation by which he was charged with an intent to commit a murder, that could produce no advantage, and soon convinced her how little his former conduct could deserve to be mentioned as a reason for extraordinary severity.

The interposition of this Lady was so successful, that he was soon after admitted to bail, and on the 9th of March 1728, pleaded the King's pardon.

It is natural to enquire upon what motives his mother could persecute him in a manner so outrageous and implacable; for what reason she could employ all the acts of malice, and all the snares of calumny, to take away the life of her own son, of a son who never injured her, who was never supported by her expense, nor obstructed any prospect of pleasure or advantage; why she should endeavour to destroy him by a lie; a lie which could not gain credit, but must vanish of itself at the first moment of examination, and of which only this can be said to make it probable, that it may be observed from her conduct, that the most execrable crimes are sometimes committed without apparent temptation.

This mother is still alive, and may perhaps even yet, though her malice was so often defeated, enjoy the pleasure of reflecting, that the life which she often endeavoured to destroy, was at least shortened by her maternal offices; that though she could not transport her son to the plantations, bury him in the shop of a mechanic, or hasten the hand of the public executioner,

tioner, she has yet had the satisfaction of imbittering all his hours, and forcing him into exigencies, that hurried on his death.

It is by no means necessary to aggravate the enormity of this woman's conduct, by placing it in opposition to that of the Countess of Hertford; no one can fail to observe how much more amiable it is to relieve, than to oppress, and to rescue innocence from destruction, than to destroy without an injury.

Mr. Savage, during his imprisonment, his trial, and the time in which he lay under sentence of death, behaved with great firmness and equality of mind, and confirmed by his fortitude the esteem of those, who before admired him for his abilities. The peculiar circumstances of his life were made more generally known by a short account *, which was then published, and of which several thousands were in a few weeks dispersed over the nation; and the compassion of mankind operated so powerfully in his favour, that he was enabled, by frequent presents, not only to support himself, but to assist Mr. Gregory in prison; and when he was pardoned and released, he found the number of his friends not lessened.

The nature of the act for which he had been tried was in itself doubtful; of the evidences which appeared against him, the character of the man was not unexceptionable, that of the woman notoriously infamous: she whose testimony chiefly influenced the jury to condemn him, afterwards retracted her assertions. He always himself denied that he was drunk, as had been generally reported. Mr. Gregory, who is now Collector of Antegua, is said to declare him far less criminal than he was imagined, even by some who favoured him: And Page himself, afterwards confessed, that he had treated him with uncommon ri-

* Written by Mr. Beckingham and another gentleman.

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gour. When all these particulars are rated together, perhaps the memory of Savage may not be much sullied by his trial.

Some time after he had obtained his liberty, he met in the street the woman that had sworn with so much malignity against him. She informed him, that she was in distress, and, with a degree of confidence not easily attainable, desired him to relieve her. He, instead of insulting her misery, and taking pleasure in the calamities of one who had brought his life into danger, reproved her gently for her perjury, and changing the only guinea that he had, divided it equally between her and himself.

This is an action which in some ages would have made a saint, and perhaps in others a hero, and which, without an hyperbolical encomiums, must be allowed to be an instance of uncommon generosity, an act of complicated virtue; by which he at once relieved the poor, corrected the vicious, and forgave an enemy; by which he at once remitted the strongest provocations, and exercised the most ardent charity.

Compassion was indeed the distinguishing quality of Savage; he never appeared inclined to take advantage of weakness, to attack the defenceless, or to press upon the falling: whoever was distressed was certain at least of his good wishes; and when he could give no assistance, to extricate them from misfortunes, he endeavoured to sooth them by sympathy and tenderness.

But when his heart was not softened by the sight of misery, he was sometimes obstinate in his resentment, and did not quickly lose the remembrance of an injury. He always continued to speak with anger of the insolence and partiality of Page, and a short time before his death revenged it by a satire *.

* Vol. II. p. 208.

It is natural to enquire in what terms Mr. Savage spoke of this fatal action, when the danger was over, and he was under no necessity of using any art to set his conduct in the fairest light. He was not willing to dwell upon it, and if he transiently mentioned it, appeared neither to consider himself as a murderer, nor as a man wholly free from the guilt of blood *. How much and how long he regretted it, appeared in a † poem which he published many years afterwards. On occasion of a copy of verses, in which the failings of good men were recounted, and in which the author had endeavoured to illustrate his position, that, 'the best may sometimes deviate from virtue,' by an instance of murder committed by Savage in the heat of wine, Savage remarked, that it was no very just representation of a good man, to suppose him liable to drunkenness, and disposed in his riots to cut throats.

He was now indeed at liberty, but was, as before, without any other support than accidental favours and uncertain patronage afforded him; sources by which he was sometimes very liberally supplied, and which at other times were suddenly stopped; so that he spent his life between want and plenty, or, what was yet worse, between beggary and extravagance; for as whatever he received was the gift of chance, which might as well favour him at one time as another, he was tempted to squander what he had, because he always hoped to be immediately supplied.

Another cause of his profusion was the absurd kindness of his friends, who at once rewarded and enjoyed his abilities, by treating him at taverns, and habituated him to pleasures which he could not afford to enjoy, and which he was not able to deny himself, tho'

* In one of his letters he styles it 'a fatal quarrel, but too well known.'

† Vol. II. p. 93.

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he purchased the luxury of a single night by the anguish of cold and hunger for a week.

The experience of these inconveniencies determined him to endeavour after some settled income, which, having long found submission and intreaties fruitless, he attempted to extort from his mother by rougher methods. He had now, as he acknowledged, lost that tenderness for her, which the whole series of her cruelty had not been able wholly to repress, till he found, by the efforts which she made for his destruction, that she was not content with refusing to assist him, and being neutral in his struggles with poverty, but was as ready to snatch every opportunity of adding to his misfortunes, and that she was to be considered as an enemy implacably malicious, whom nothing but his blood could satisfy. He therefore threatened to harass her with lampoons, and to publish a copious narrative of her conduct, unless she consented to purchase an exemption from infamy, by allowing him a pension.

This expedient proved successful. Whether shame still survived, though virtue was extinct, or whether her relations had more delicacy than herself, and imagined that some of the darts which satire might point at her would glance upon them: Lord Tyrconnel, whatever were his motives, upon his promise to lay aside his design of exposing the cruelty of his mother, received him into his family, treated him as his equal, and engaged to allow him a pension of two hundred pounds a year.

This was the golden part of Mr. Savage's life; and for some time he had no reason to complain of fortune; his appearance was splendid, his expences large, and his acquaintance extensive. He was courted by all who endeavoured to be thought men of genius, and caressed by all who valued themselves upon a refined taste.

taste. To admire Mr. Savage was a proof of discernment, and to be acquainted with him was a title to poetical reputation. His presence was sufficient to make any place of public entertainment popular; and his approbation and example constituted the fashion. So powerful is genius, when it is invested with the glitter of affluence! Men willingly pay to fortune that regard which they owe to merit, and are pleased when they have an opportunity at once of gratifying their vanity, and practising their duty.

This interval of prosperity furnished him with opportunities of enlarging his knowledge of human nature, by contemplating life from its highest gradations to its lowest, and had he afterwards applied to dramatic poetry he would perhaps not have had many superiors; for as he never suffered any scene to pass before his eyes without notice, he had treasured in his mind all the different combinations of passions, and the innumerable mixtures of vice and virtue, which distinguish one character from another; and as his conception was strong, his expressions were clear, he easily received impressions from objects, and very forcibly transmitted them to others.

Of his exact observations on human life he has left a proof, which would do honour to the greatest names, in a small pamphlet, called, *THE AUTHOR TO BE LET* *, where he introduces Iscariot Hackney, a prostitute scribbler, giving an account of his birth, his education, his disposition and morals, habits of life, and maxims of conduct. In the introduction are related many secret histories of the petty writers of that time, but sometimes mixed with ungenerous reflections on their birth, their circumstances, or those of their relations; nor can it be denied, that some pas-

* Vol. II. p. 237.

sages are such as Iscariot Hackney might himself have produced.

He was accused likewise of living in an appearance of friendship with some whom he satirised, and of making use of the confidence which he gained by a seeming kindness to discover failings and expose them : it must be confessed, that Mr. Savage's esteem was no very certain possession, and that he would lampoon at one time those whom he had praised at another.

It may be alleged that the same man may change his principles, and that he who was once deservedly commended, may be afterwards satirised with equal justice, or that the poet was dazzled with the appearance of virtue, and found the man whom he had celebrated, when he had an opportunity of examining him more nearly, unworthy of the panegyric which he had too hastily bestowed ; and that as a false satire ought to be recanted, for the sake of him whose reputation may be injured, false praise ought likewise to be obviated, lest the distinction between vice and virtue should be lost, lest a bad man should be trusted upon the credit of his encomiast, or lest others should endeavour to obtain the like praises by the same means.

But though these excuses may be often plausible, and sometimes just, they are very seldom satisfactory to mankind ; and the writer, who is not constant to his subject, quickly sinks into contempt, his satire loses its force, and his panegyric its value, and he is only considered at one time as a flatterer, and as a calumniator at another.

To avoid these imputations, it is only necessary to follow the rules of virtue, and to preserve an unvaried regard to truth. For though it is undoubtedly possible, that a man, however cautious, may be sometimes deceived by an artful appearance of virtue, or by false evidences of guilt, such errors will not be frequent ;
and

and it will be allowed, that the name of an author would never have been made contemptible, had no man ever said what he did not think, or misled others, but when he was himself deceived.

If *THE AUTHOR TO BE LET* was first published in a single pamphlet, and afterwards inserted in a collection of pieces relating to the *Dunciad*, which were addressed by Mr. Savage to the Earl of Middlesex, in a dedication which he was prevailed upon to sign, tho' he did not write it, and in which there are some positions, that the true author would perhaps not have published under his own name, and on which Mr. Savage afterwards reflected with no great satisfaction; the enumeration of the bad effects of the uncontrolled freedom of the press, and the assertion that the 'Liberties taken by the writers of Journals with their superiors were exorbitant and unjustifiable,' very ill became men, who have themselves not always shewn the exactest regard to the laws of subordination in their writings, and who have often satirised those that at least thought themselves their superiors, as they were eminent for their hereditary rank, and employed in the highest offices of the kingdom. But this is only an instance of that partiality which almost every man indulges with regard to himself; the liberty of the press is a blessing when we are inclined to write against others, and a calamity when we find ourselves overborn by the multitude of our assailants; as the power of the crown is always thought too great by those who suffer by its influence, and too little by those in whose favour it is exerted; and a standing army is generally accounted necessary by those who command, and dangerous and oppressive by those who support it.

* Vol. II. p. 239.

Mr.

Mr. Savage was likewise very far from believing, that the letters annexed to each species of bad poets in the Bathos, were, as he was directed to assert, 'set down at random;' for when he was charged by one of his friends with putting his name to such an improbability, he had no other answer to make, than that 'he did not think of it,' and his friend had too much tenderness to reply, that next to the crime of writing contrary to what he thought, was that of writing without thinking.

After having remarked what is false in this dedication, it is proper that I observe the impartiality which I recommend, by declaring what Savage asserted, that the account of the circumstances which attended the publication of the Dunciad, however strange and improbable, was exactly true.

The publication of this piece at this time raised Mr. Savage a great number of enemies among those that were attacked by Mr. Pope, with whom he was considered as a kind of confederate, and whom he was suspected of supplying with private intelligence and secret incidents: so that the ignominy of an informer was added to the terror of a satirist.

That he was not altogether free from literary hypocrisy, and that he sometimes spoke one thing, and wrote another, cannot be denied; because he himself confessed, that when he lived in great familiarity with Dennis, he wrote an epigram * against him.

* This epigram was, I believe, never published.

Should Dennis publish you had stabb'd your brother,
 Lampoon'd your monarch, or debauch'd your mother;
 Say what revenge on Dennis can be had,
 Too dull for laughter, for reply too mad?
 On one so poor you cannot take the law,
 On one so old your sword you scorn to draw:
 Uncag'd, then, let the harmless monster rage,
 Secure in dulness, madness, want, and age.

Mr.

Mr. Savage however set all the malice of all the piggish writers at defiance, and thought the friendship of Mr. Pope cheaply purchased by being exposed to their censure and their hatred; nor had he any reason to repent of the preference, for he found Mr. Pope a steady and unalienable friend almost to the end of his life.

About this time, notwithstanding his avowed neutrality with regard to party, he published a panegyric on Sir Robert Walpole, for which he was rewarded by him with twenty guineas, a sum not very large, if either the excellence of the performance, or the affluence of the patron be considered; but greater than he afterwards obtained from a person of yet higher rank, and more desirous in appearance of being distinguished as a patron of literature.

As he was very far from approving the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole, and in conversation mentioned him sometimes with acrimony, and generally with contempt; as he was one of those who were always zealous in their assertions of the justice of the late opposition, jealous of the rights of the people, and alarmed by the long-continued triumph of the court; it was natural to ask him what could induce him to employ his poetry in praise of that man who was, in his opinion, an enemy to liberty, and an oppressor of his country? He alleged, that he was then dependent upon the Lord Tyrconnel, who was, an implicit follower of the ministry, and that being enjoined by him, not without menaces, to write in praise of his leader, he had not resolution sufficient to sacrifice the pleasure of affluence to that of integrity.

On this, and on many other occasions, he was ready to lament the misery of living at the tables of other men, which was his fate from the beginning to the end of his life; for I know not whether he ever had,
for

for three months together, a settled habitation, in which he could claim a right of residence.

To this unhappy state it is just to impute much of the inconstancy of his conduct; for though a readiness to comply with the inclination of others was no part of his natural character, yet he was sometimes obliged to relax his obstinacy, and submit his own judgment and even his virtue to the government of those by whom he was supported: so that if his miseries were sometimes the consequences of his faults, he ought not yet to be wholly excluded from compassion, because his faults were very often the effects of his misfortunes.

In this gay period * of his life, while he was surrounded by affluence and pleasure, he published *THE WANDERER*, a moral Poem, of which the design is comprised in these lines:

Lfly all public care, all venal strife,
To try the still compar'd with active life;
To prove, by these the sons of men may owe,
The fruits of bliss to bursting clouds of woe;
That e'en calamity, by thought refin'd,
Inspirits and adorns the thinking mind.

And more distinctly in the following passage:

By woe, the soul to daring action swells;
By woe, in plaintless patience it excels;
From patience, prudent clear experience springs,
And traces knowledge thro' the course of things!
Thence hope is form'd, thence fortitude, success,
Renown:—whate'er men covet and care for.

This performance was always considered by himself as his master-piece; and Mr. Pope, when he asked his opinion of it, told him, that he read it once over, and was not displeased with it, that it gave him

more

more pleasure at the second perusal, and delighted him still more at the third.

It has been generally objected to *THE WANDERER*, that the disposition of the parts is irregular, that the design is obscure, and the plan perplexed; that the images, however beautiful, succeed each other without order; and that the whole performance is not so much a regular fabric, as a heap of shining materials thrown together by accident, which strikes rather with the solemn magnificence of a stupendous ruin, than the elegant grandeur of a finished pile.

This criticism is universal, and therefore it is reasonable to believe it at least in a great degree just; but Mr. Savage was always of a contrary opinion, and thought his drift could only be missed by negligence or stupidity, and that the whole plan was regular, and the parts distinct.

It was never denied to abound with strong representations of nature, and just observations upon life, and it may easily be observed, that most of his pictures have an evident tendency to illustrate his first great position, 'that good is the consequence of evil.' The sun that burns up the mountains, fructifies the vales; the deluge that rushes down the broken rocks with dreadful impetuosity, is separated into purling brooks; and the rage of the hurricane purifies the air.

Even in this poem he has not been able to forbear one touch upon the cruelty of his mother*, which, though remarkably delicate and tender, is a proof how deep an impression it had upon his mind.

This must be at least acknowledged, which ought to be thought equivalent to many other excellencies, that this poem can promote no other purposes than those of virtue, and that it is written with a very strong sense of the efficacy of religion.

* Vol. II. p. 41.

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But my province is rather to give the history of Mr. Savage's performances, than to display their beauties, or to obviate the criticisms which they have occasioned, and therefore I shall not dwell upon the particular passages which deserve applause: I shall neither show the excellence of his descriptions *, nor expatiate on the terrific portrait of suicide †, nor point out the artful touches ‡, by which he has distinguished the intellectual features of the rebels, who suffer death in his last canto. It is, however, proper to observe, that Mr. Savage always declared the characters wholly fictitious, and without the least allusion to any real persons or actions.

From a poem so diligently laboured, and so successfully finished, it might be reasonably expected that he should have gained considerable advantage; nor can it, without some degree of indignation and concern, be told, that he sold the copy for ten guineas, of which he afterwards returned two, that the two last sheets of the work might be reprinted, of which he had in his absence intrusted the correction to a friend, who was too indolent to perform it with accuracy.

A superstitious regard to the correction of his sheets was one of Mr. Savage's peculiarities: he often altered, revised, recurred to his first reading or punctuation, and again adopted the alteration; he was dubious and irresolute without end, as on a question of the last importance, and at last was seldom satisfied: the intrusion or omission of a comma was sufficient to discompose him, and he would lament an error of a single letter as a heavy calamity. In one of his letters relating to an impression of some verses, he remarks, that he had, with regard to the correction of the proof, 'a spell upon him;' and indeed the anxiety with which he dwelt upon the minutest and most trifling

* Vol. II. p. 59. † Ibid. p. 27. ‡ Ibid. p. 73.

niceties,

niceties, deserved no other name than that of fascination.

That he sold so valuable a performance for so small a price was not to be imputed either to necessity, by which the learned and ingenious are often obliged to submit to very hard conditions, or to avarice, by which the booksellers are frequently incited to oppress that genius by which they are supported, but to that intemperate desire of pleasure, and habitual slavery to his passions, which involved him in many perplexities; he happened at that time to be engaged in the pursuit of some trifling gratification, and being without money for the present occasion, sold his poem to the first bidder, and perhaps for the first price that was proposed, and would probably have been content with less, if less had been offered him.

This poem was addressed to the Lord Tyrconnel not only in the first lines*, but in a formal dedication filled with the highest strains of panegyric, and the warmest professions of gratitude, but by no means remarkable for delicacy of connection or elegance of style.

These praises in a short time he found himself inclined to retract, being discarded by the man on whom he had bestowed them, and whom he then immediately discovered not to have deserved them. Of this quarrel, which every day made more bitter, Lord Tyrconnel and Mr. Savage assigned very different reasons, which might perhaps all in reality concur, though they were not all convenient to be alleged by either party. Lord Tyrconnel affirmed, that it was the constant practice of Mr. Savage to enter a tavern with any company that proposed it, drink the most expensive wines with great profusion, and when the reckoning was demanded, to be without money: If, as it often happened, his company were willing to

* Vol. II, p. 7.

defray his part, the affair ended, without any ill consequences ; but if they were refractory, and expected that the wine should be paid for by him that drank it, his method of composition was, to take them with him to his own apartment, assume the government of the house, and order the butler in an imperious manner to set the best wine in the cellar before his company, who often drank till they forgot the respect due to the house in which they were entertained, indulged themselves in the utmost extravagance of merriment, practised the most licentious frolics, and committed all the outrages of drunkenness.

Nor was this the only charge which Lord Tyrconnel brought against him : Having given him a collection of valuable books, stamped with his own arms, he had the mortification to see them in a short time exposed to sale upon the stalls, it being usual with Mr. Savage, when he wanted a small sum, to take his books to the pawnbroker.

Whoever was acquainted with Mr. Savage easily credited both these accusations ; for having been obliged from his first entrance into the world to subsist upon expedients, affluence was not able to exalt him above them ; and so much was he delighted with wine and conversation, and so long had he been accustomed to live by chance, that he would at any time go to the tavern without scruple, and trust for his reckoning to the liberality of his company, and frequently of company to whom he was very little known. This conduct indeed very seldom drew upon him those inconveniences that might be feared by any other person ; for his conversation was so entertaining, and his address so pleasing, that few thought the pleasure which they received from him dearly purchased, by paying for his wine. It was his peculiar happiness, that he scarcely ever found a stranger, whom he did

not leave a friend; but it must likewise be added, that he had not often a friend long, without obliging him to become a stranger.

Mr. Savage, on the other hand, declared, that Lord Tyrconnel * quarrelled with him, because he would subtract from his own luxury and extravagance what he had promised to allow him, and that his resentment was only a plea for the violation of his promise: He asserted, that he had done nothing that ought to exclude him from that subsistence which he thought not so much a favour, as a debt, since it was offered him upon conditions, which he had never broken; and that his only fault was, that he could not be supported with nothing.

He acknowledged, that Lord Tyrconnel often exhorted him to regulate his method of life, and not to spend all his nights in taverns, and that he appeared very desirous, that he would pass those hours with him, which he so freely bestowed upon others. This demand Mr. Savage considered as a censure of his conduct, which he could never patiently bear; and which in the latter and cooler part of his life was so offensive to him, that he declared it as his resolution, 'to spurn that friend who should presume to dictate to him;' and it is not likely, that in his earlier years he received admonitions with more calmness.

He was likewise inclined to resent such expectations, as tending to infringe his liberty, of which he was very jealous, when it was necessary to the gratification of his passions, and declared, that the request was still more unreasonable, as the company to which he was to have been confined was insupportably disagreeable. This assertion affords another instance of that incon-

* His expression in one of his letters, was, 'that Lord T——l had involved his estate, and therefore poorly sought an occasion to quarrel with him.'

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sistency of his writings with his conversation, which was so often to be observed. He forgot how lavishly he had, in his * Dedication to *THE WANDERER*, extolled the delicacy and penetration, the humanity and generosity, the candour and politeness of the man, whom, when he no longer loved him, he declared to be a wretch without understanding, without good nature, and without justice; of whose name he thought himself obliged to leave no trace in any future edition of his writings; and accordingly blotted it out of that copy of *THE WANDERER* which was in his hands.

During his continuance with the Lord Tyrconnel, he wrote † *THE TRIUMPH OF HEALTH AND MIRTH*, on the recovery of Lady Tyrconnel from a languishing illness. This performance is remarkable, not only for the gaiety of the ideas, and the melody of the numbers, but for the agreeable fiction upon which it is formed. Mirth, overwhelmed with sorrow for the sickness of her favourite, takes a flight in quest of her sister Health, whom she finds reclined upon the brow of a lofty mountain, amidst the fragrance of perpetual spring, with the breezes of the morning sporting about her. Being solicited by her sister Mirth, she readily promises her assistance, flies away in a cloud, and impregnates the waters of Bath with new virtues, by which the sickness of Belinda is relieved.

As the reputation of his abilities, the particular circumstances of his birth and life, the splendour of his appearance, and the distinction which was for some time paid him by Lord Tyrconnel, intitled him to familiarity with persons of higher rank, than those to whose conversation he had been before admitted, he did not fail to gratify that curiosity, which induced him to take a nearer view of those whom their birth, their employments, or their fortunes, necessarily

* Vol. II. p. 3.

† Vol. II. p. 99.

place at a distance from the greatest part of mankind, and to examine whether their merit was magnified or diminished by the medium through which it was contemplated; whether the splendour with which they dazzled their admirers was inherent in themselves, or only reflected on them by the objects that surrounded them; and whether great men were selected for high stations, or high stations made great men.

For this purpose he took all opportunities of conversing familiarly with those who were most conspicuous at that time for their power or their influence; he watched their looser moments, and examined their domestic behaviour with that acuteness which nature had given him, and which the uncommon variety of his life had contributed to increase, and that inquisitiveness which must always be produced in a vigorous mind, by an absolute freedom from all pressing or domestic engagements. His discernment was quick, and therefore he soon found in every person, and in every affair, something that deserved attention; he was supported by others, without any care for himself, and was therefore at leisure to pursue his observations.

More circumstances to constitute a critic on human life could not easily concur, nor indeed could any man, who assumed from accidental advantages more praise than he could justly claim from his real merit, admit an acquaintance more dangerous than that of Savage; of whom likewise it must be confessed, that abilities really exalted above the common level, or virtue refined from passion, or proof against corruption, could not easily find an abler judge, or a warmer advocate.

What was the result of Mr. Savage's enquiry, though he was not much accustomed to conceal his discoveries, it may not be entirely safe to relate, because the persons whose characters he criticised are
powerful;

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powerful; and power and resentment are seldom strangers; nor would it perhaps be wholly just, because what he asserted in conversation might, though true in general, be heightened by some momentary ardour of imagination, and as it can be delivered only from memory, may be imperfectly represented; so that the picture at first aggravated, and then unskilfully copied, may be justly suspected to retain no great resemblance of the original.

It may however be observed, that he did not appear to have formed very elevated ideas of those to whom the administration of affairs, or the conduct of parties, has been intrusted; who have been considered as the advocates of the crown, or the guardians of the people, and who have obtained the most implicit confidence, and the loudest applauses. Of one particular person, who has been at one time so popular as to be generally esteemed, and at another so formidable as to be universally detested, he observed, that his acquisitions had been small, or that his capacity was narrow, and that the whole range of his mind was from obscenity to politics, and from politics to obscenity.

But the opportunity of indulging his speculations on great characters was now at an end. He was banished from the table of Lord Tyrconnel, and turned again adrift upon the world, without prospect of finding quickly any other harbour. As prudence was not one of the virtues by which he was distinguished, he had made no provision against a misfortune like this. And though it is not to be imagined, but that the separation must for some time have been preceded by coldness, peevishness, or neglect, though it was undoubtedly the consequence of accumulated provocations on both sides, yet every one that knew Savage will readily believe, that to him it was sudden as a stroke of thunder; that though he might have transiently suspected it, he had

never suffered any thought so unpleasing to sink into his mind, but that he had driven it away by amusements, or dreams of future felicity and affluence, and had never taken any measures by which he might prevent a precipitation from plenty to indigence.

This quarrel and separation, and the difficulties to which Mr. Savage was exposed by them, were soon known both to his friends and enemies; nor was it long before he perceived, from the behaviour of both, how much is added to the lustre of genius, by the ornaments of wealth.

His condition did not appear to excite much compassion; for he had not always been careful to use the advantages he enjoyed with that moderation, which ought to have been with more than usual caution preserved by him, who knew, if he had reflected, that he was only a dependant on the bounty of another, whom he could expect to support him no longer than he endeavoured to preserve his favour, by complying with his inclinations, and whom he nevertheless set at defiance, and was continually irritating by negligence or encroachments.

Examples need not be sought at any great distance to prove, that superiority of fortune has a natural tendency to kindle pride, and that pride seldom fails to exert itself in contempt and insult; and if this is often the effect of hereditary wealth, and of honours enjoyed only by the merit of others, it is some extenuation of any indecent triumphs to which this unhappy man may have been betrayed, that his prosperity was heightened, by the force of novelty, and made more intoxicating by a sense of the misery in which he had so long languished, and perhaps of the insults which he had formerly borne, and which he might now think himself entitled to revenge. It is too common for those who have unjustly suffered pain, to inflict it
likewise

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likewise in their turn, with the same injustice, and to imagine that they have a right to treat others as they have themselves been treated.

That Mr. Savage was too much elevated by any good fortune, is generally known; and some passages of his Introduction to *THE AUTHOR TO BE LET* sufficiently shew, that he did not wholly refrain from such satire as he afterwards thought very unjust, when he was exposed to it himself; for when he was afterwards ridiculed in the character of a distressed poet, he very easily discovered, that distress was not a proper subject for merriment, or topic of invective. He was then able to discern, that if misery be the effect of virtue, it ought to be revered; if of ill-fortune, to be pitied; and if of vice, not to be insulted, because it is perhaps itself a punishment adequate to the crime by which it was produced. And the humanity of that man can deserve no panegyric, who is capable of reproaching a criminal in the hands of the executioner.

But these reflections, though they readily occurred to him in the first and last parts of his life, were, I am afraid, for a long time forgotten; at least they were, like many other maxims, treasured up in his mind, rather for shew than use, and operated very little upon his conduct, however elegantly he might sometimes explain, or however forcibly he might inculcate them.

His degradation therefore from the condition which he had enjoyed with such wanton thoughtlessness, was considered by many as an occasion of triumph. Those who had before paid their court to him, without success, soon returned the contempt which they had suffered; and they who had received favours from him, for of such favours as he could bestow he was very liberal, did not always remember them. So much more certain are the effects of resentment than of gratitude: it is not only to many more pleasing to recollect those

faults which place others below them, than those virtues by which they are themselves comparatively depressed; but it is likewise more easy to neglect, than to recompense; and tho' there are few who will practise a laborious virtue, there will never be wanting multitudes that will indulge an easy vice.

Savage however was very little disturbed at the marks of contempt which his ill-fortune brought upon him, from those whom he never esteemed, and with whom he never considered himself as levelled by any calamities; and though it was not without some uneasiness that he saw some, whose friendship he valued, change their behaviour; he yet observed their coldness without much emotion, considered them as the slaves of fortune and the worshippers of prosperity; and was more inclined to despise them, than to lament himself.

It does not appear, that after this return of his wants, he found mankind equally favourable to him, as at his first appearance in the world. His story, though in reality not less melancholy, was less affecting, because it was no longer new; it therefore procured no new friends, and those that had formerly relieved him thought they might now consign him to others. He was now likewise considered by many rather as criminal, than as unhappy; for the friends of Lord Tyrconnel, and of his mother, were sufficiently industrious to publish his weaknesses, which were indeed very numerous, and nothing was forgotten, that might make him either hateful or ridiculous.

It cannot but be imagined, that such representations of his faults must make great numbers less sensible of his distress; many who had only an opportunity to hear one part, made no scruple to propagate the account which they received; many assisted their circulation from malice or revenge, and perhaps many pretended

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tended to credit them, that they might with a better grace withdraw their regard, or withhold their assistance.

Savage however was not one of those, who suffered himself to be injured without resistance, nor was less diligent in exposing the faults of Lord Tyrconnel, over whom he obtained at least this advantage, that he drove him first to the practice of outrage and violence; for he was so much provoked by the wit and virulence of Savage, that he came with a number of attendants, that did no honour to his courage, to beat him at a coffee-house. But it happened that he had left the place a few minutes, and his lordship had without danger the pleasure of boasting, how he would have treated him. Mr. Savage went next day to repay his visit at his own house, but was prevailed on by his domestics, to retire without insisting upon seeing him.

Lord Tyrconnel was accused by Mr. Savage of some actions, which scarcely any provocations will be thought sufficient to justify; such as seizing what he had in his lodgings, and other instances of wanton cruelty, by which he increased the distress of Savage, without any advantage to himself.

These mutual accusations were retorted on both sides for many years, with the utmost degree of virulence and rage, and time seemed rather to augment than diminish their resentment. That the anger of Mr. Savage should be kept alive is not strange, because he felt every day the consequences of the quarrel; but it might reasonably have been hoped, that Lord Tyrconnel might have relented, and at length have forgot those provocations, which, however they might have once inflamed him, had not in reality much hurt him.

The spirit of Mr. Savage indeed never suffered him to solicit a reconciliation; he returned reproach for reproach, and insult for insult; his superiority of wit supplied the disadvantages of his fortune, and enabled
him

him to form a party, and prejudice great numbers in his favour.

But though this might be some gratification of his vanity, it afforded very little relief to his necessities, and he was very frequently reduced to uncommon hardships, of which, however, he never made any mean or importunate complaints, being formed rather to bear misery with fortitude, than enjoy prosperity with moderation.

He now thought himself again at liberty to expose the cruelty of his mother, and therefore, I believe, about this time, published *THE BASTARD*, a poem remarkable for the vivacious sallies of thought in the beginning*, where he makes a pompous enumeration of the imaginary advantages of base birth, and the pathetic sentiments at the end, where he recounts the real calamities which he suffered by the crime of his parents.

The vigour and spirit of the verses, the peculiar circumstances of the author, the novelty of the subject, and the notoriety of the story, to which the allusions are made, procured this performance a very favourable reception; great numbers were immediately dispersed, and editions were multiplied with unusual rapidity.

One circumstance attended the publication, which Savage used to relate with great satisfaction. His mother, to whom the poem was with 'due reverence' inscribed, happened then to be at Bath, where she could not conveniently retire from censure, or conceal herself from observation; and no sooner did the reputation of the poem begin to spread, than she heard it repeated in all places of concourse, nor could she enter the assembly-rooms, or cross the walks without being saluted with some lines from *THE BASTARD*.

This was perhaps the first time that ever she discovered a sense of shame, and on this occasion the power

* Vol. II, p. 91.

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of wit was very conspicuous; the wretch who had, without scruple, proclaimed herself an adulteress, and who had first endeavoured to starve her son, then to transport him, and afterwards to hang him, was not able to bear the representation of her own conduct, but fled from reproach, though she felt no pain from guilt, and left Bath with the utmost haste, to shelter herself among the crouds of London.

Thus Savage had the satisfaction of finding, that though he could not reform his mother, he could punish her, and that he did not always suffer alone.

The pleasure which he received from this increase of his poetical reputation, was sufficient for some time to overbalance the miseries of want, which this performance did not much alleviate, for it was sold for a very trivial sum to a bookseller, who, though the success was so uncommon, that five impressions were sold, of which many were undoubtedly very numerous, had not generosity sufficient to admit the unhappy writer to any part of the profit.

The sale of this poem was always mentioned by Savage with the utmost elevation of heart, and referred to by him as an incontestable proof of a general acknowledgment of his abilities. It was indeed the only production of which he could justly boast a general reception.

But though he did not lose the opportunity which success gave him of setting a high rate on his abilities, but paid due deference to the suffrages of mankind when they were given in his favour, he did not suffer his esteem of himself to depend upon others, nor found any thing sacred in the voice of the people when they were inclined to censure him; he then readily shewed the folly of expecting that the public should judge right, observed how slowly poetical merit had often forced its way into the world; he contented himself
with

with the applause of men of judgment, and was somewhat disposed to exclude all those from the character of men of judgment, who did not applaud him.

But he was at other times more favourable to mankind, than to think them blind to the beauties of his works, and imputed the slowness of their sale to other causes; either they were published at a time when the town was empty, or when the attention of the public was engrossed by some struggle in the parliament, or some other object of general concern; or they were by the neglect of the publisher not diligently dispersed, or by his avarice not advertised with sufficient frequency. Address, or industry, or liberality, was always wanting; and the blame was laid rather on any other person than the author.

By arts like these, arts which every man practises in some degree, and to which too much of the little tranquillity of life is to be ascribed, Savage was always able to live at peace with himself. Had he indeed only made use of these expedients to alleviate the loss or want of fortune or reputation, or any other advantages, which it is not in man's power to bestow upon himself, they might have been justly mentioned as instances of a philosophical mind, and very properly proposed to the imitation of multitudes, who, for want of diverting their imaginations with the same dexterity, languish under afflictions which might be easily removed.

It were doubtless to be wished, that truth and reason were universally prevalent; that every thing were esteemed according to its real value; and that men would secure themselves from being disappointed in their endeavours after happiness, by placing it only in virtue, which is always to be obtained; but if adventitious and foreign pleasures must be pursued, it would be perhaps of some benefit, since that pursuit
must

must frequently be fruitless, if the practice of Savage could be taught, that folly might be an antidote to folly, and one fallacy be obviated by another.

But the danger of this pleasing intoxication must not be concealed; nor indeed can any one, after having observed the life of Savage, need to be cautioned against it. By imputing none of his miseries to himself, he continued to act upon the same principles, and to follow the same path; was never made wiser by his sufferings, nor preserved by one misfortune from falling into another. He proceeded throughout his life to tread the same steps on the same circle; always applauding his past conduct, or at least forgetting it, to amuse himself with phantoms of happiness, which were dancing before him; and willingly turned his eyes from the light of reason, when it would have discovered the illusion, and shewn him, what he never wished to see, his real state.

He is even accused, after having lulled his imagination with those ideal opiates, of having tried the same experiment upon his conscience; and having accustomed himself to impute all deviations from the right to foreign causes, it is certain that he was upon every occasion too easily reconciled to himself, and that he appeared very little to regret those practices which had impaired his reputation. The reigning error of his life was, that he mistook the love for the practice of virtue, and was indeed not so much a good man, as the friend of goodness.

This at least must be allowed him, that he always preserved a strong sense of the dignity, the beauty, and the necessity of virtue, and that he never contributed deliberately to spread corruption amongst mankind; his actions, which were generally precipitate, were often blameable; but his writings being the productions

ductions of study, uniformly tended to the exaltation of the mind, and the propagation of morality and piety.

These writings may improve mankind, when his failings shall be forgotten, and therefore he must be considered upon the whole as a benefactor to the world; nor can his personal example do any hurt, since whoever hears of his faults, will hear of the miseries which they brought upon him, and which would deserve less pity, had not his condition been such as made his faults pardonable. He may be considered as a child exposed to all the temptations of indigence, at an age when resolution was not yet strengthened by conviction, nor virtue confirmed by habit; a circumstance, which in his **BASTARD** he laments in a very affecting manner.

———No Mother's care

Shielded my infant innocence with pray'r :

No Father's guardian hand my youth maintain'd,

Call'd forth my virtues, or from vice restrain'd.

THE BASTARD, however it might provoke or mortify his mother, could not be expected to melt her to compassion, so that he was still under the same want of the necessaries of life, and he therefore exerted all the interest which his wit, or his birth, or his misfortunes could procure, to obtain upon the death of Eusden the place of Poet Laureat, and prosecuted his application with so much diligence, that the King publicly declared it his intention to bestow it upon him; but such was the fate of Savage, that even the King, when he intended his advantage, was disappointed in his schemes; for the Lord Chamberlain, who has the disposal of the laurel, as one of the appendages of his office, either did not know the king's design, or did not approve it, or thought the nomination of the Laureat an encroachment upon his rights, and therefore bestowed the laurel upon Colly Cibber.

Mr.

Mr. Savage, thus disappointed, took a resolution of applying to the Queen, that having once given him life, she would enable him to support it, and therefore published a short poem on her birth-day, to which he gave the odd title of VOLUNTEER LAUREAT.* The event of this essay he has himself related in the following letter, which he prefixed to the poem, when he afterwards reprinted it in THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, from whence I have copied it intire, as this was one of the few attempts in which Mr. Savage succeeded.

‘ Mr. URBAN,

‘ In your Magazine for February you published
 ‘ the last VOLUNTEER LAUREAT, written on a very
 ‘ melancholy occasion, the death of the royal patron-
 ‘ nefs of arts and literature in general, and of the
 ‘ author of that poem in particular: I now fend you
 ‘ the first that Mr. Savage wrote under that title.—
 ‘ This gentleman, notwithstanding a very considerable
 ‘ interest, being, on the death of Mr. Eusden,
 ‘ disappointed of the Laureat's place, wrote the be-
 ‘ fore-mentioned poem†; which were no sooner pub-
 ‘ lished, but the late Queen sent to a bookseller for
 ‘ them: the author had not at that time a friend either
 ‘ to get him introduced, or his poem presented at
 ‘ court; yet such was the unspeakable goodness of that
 ‘ Princess, that, notwithstanding this act of ceremony
 ‘ was wanting, in a few days after publication, Mr.
 ‘ Savage received a Bank-bill of fifty pounds, and a
 ‘ gracious message from her Majesty, by the Lord
 ‘ North and Guildford, to this effect: “ That her
 ‘ Majesty was highly pleased with the verses; that
 ‘ she took particularly kind his lines there relating
 ‘ to the King; that he had permission to write annu-
 ‘ ally

* Vol. II. p. 220. † Ibid.

“ ally on the same subject; and that he should yearly
“ receive the like present, till something better
“ (which was her Majesty’s intention) could be done
“ for him.” ‘ After this he was permitted to present
‘ one of his annual poems to her Majesty, had the
‘ honour of kissing her hand, and met with the most
‘ gracious reception. Your’s, &c.’

Such was the performance, and such its reception; a reception which, though by no means unkind, was yet not in the highest degree generous: to chain down the genius of a writer to an annual panegyric, shewed in the Queen too much desire of hearing her own praises, and a greater regard to herself than to him on whom her bounty was conferred. It was a kind of avaricious generosity, by which flattery was rather purchased than genius rewarded.

Mrs. Oldfield had formerly given him the same allowance with much more heroic intention; she had no other view than to enable him to prosecute his studies, and to set himself above the want of assistance, and was contented with doing good without stipulating for encomiums.

Mr. Savage however was not at liberty to make exceptions, but was ravished with the favours which he had received, and probably yet more with those which he was to receive; he considered himself now as a favourite of the Queen, and did not doubt but a few annual poems would establish him in some profitable employment.

He therefore assumed the title of VOLUNTEER LAUREAT, not without some reprehensions from Cibber, who informed him, that the title of LAUREAT was a mark of honour conferred by the King, from whom all honour is derived, and which therefore no man has a right to bestow upon himself; and added, that

that he might with equal propriety stile himself a Volunteer Lord, or Volunteer Baronet. It cannot be denied that the remark was just; but Savage did not think any title, which was conferred upon Mr. Cibber, so honourable as that the usurpation of it could be imputed to him as an instance of very exorbitant vanity, and therefore continued to write under the same title, and received every year the same reward.

He did not appear to consider these encomiums as tests of his abilities, or as any thing more than annual hints to the Queen of her promise, or acts of ceremony, by the performance of which he was intitled to his pension, and therefore did not labour them with great diligence, or print more than fifty each year, except that for some of the last years he regularly inserted them in *THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE*, by which they were dispersed over the kingdom.

Of some of them he had himself so low an opinion, that he intended to omit them in the collection of poems, for which he printed proposals, and solicited subscriptions; nor can it seem strange, that being confined to the same subject, he should be at some times indolent, and at others unsuccessful; that he should sometimes delay a disagreeable task, till it was too late to perform it well; or that he should sometimes repeat the same sentiment on the same occasion, or at others be misled by an attempt after novelty to forced conceptions, and far-fetched images.

He wrote indeed with a double intention, which supplied him with some variety; for his business was to praise the Queen for the favours which he had received, and to complain to her of the delay of those which she had promised: in some of his pieces, therefore, gratitude is predominant, and in some discontent; in some he represents himself as happy in her patronage, and in others as disconsolate to find himself neglected.

Her promise, like other promises made to this unfortunate man, was never performed, though he took sufficient care that it should not be forgotten. The publication of his VOLUNTEER LAUREAT procured him no other reward than a regular remittance of fifty pounds.

He was not so depressed by his disappointments as to neglect any opportunity that was offered of advancing his interest. When the Princess Anne was married, he wrote a poem * upon her departure, only, as he declared, 'because it was expected from him,' and he was not willing to bar his own prospects by any appearance of neglect.

He never mentioned any advantage gained by this poem, or any regard that was paid to it, and therefore it is likely that it was considered at court as an act of duty to which he was obliged by his dependence, and which it was therefore not necessary to reward by any new favour: or perhaps the Queen really intended his advancement, and therefore thought it superfluous to lavish presents upon a man whom she intended to establish for life.

About this time not only his hopes were in danger of being frustrated, but his pension likewise of being obstructed by an accidental calumny. The writer of THE DAILY COURANT, a paper then published under the direction of the ministry, charged him with a crime, which though not very great in itself, would have been remarkably invidious in him, and might very justly have incensed the Queen against him. He was accused by name of influencing elections against the court, by appearing at the head of a tory mob; nor did the accuser fail to aggravate his crime, by representing it as the effect of the most atrocious ingratitude, and a kind of a rebellion against the Queen, who had first preserved him from an infamous death;

* Vol. II. p. 192.

and afterwards distinguished him by her favour, and supported him by her charity. The charge, as it was open and confident, was likewise by good fortune very particular. The place of the transaction was mentioned, and the whole series of the rioter's conduct related. This exactness made Mr. Savage's vindication easy; for he never had in his life seen the place which was declared to be the scene of his wickedness, nor ever had been present in any town when its representatives were chosen. This answer he therefore made haste to publish, with all the circumstances necessary to make it credible, and very reasonably demanded, that the accusation should be retracted in the same paper, that he might no longer suffer the imputation of sedition and ingratitude. This demand was likewise pressed by him in a private letter to the author of the paper, who either trusting to the protection of those whose defence he had undertaken, or having entertained some personal malice against Mr. Savage, or fearing, lest, by retracting so confident an assertion, he should impair the credit of his paper, refused to give him that satisfaction.

Mr. Savage therefore thought it necessary, to his own vindication, to prosecute him in the King's Bench; but as he did not find any ill effects from the accusation, having sufficiently cleared his innocence, he thought any farther procedure would have the appearance of revenge, and therefore willingly dropped it.

He saw soon afterwards a process commenced in the same court against himself, on an information in which he was accused of writing and publishing an obscene pamphlet.

It was always Mr. Savage's desire to be distinguished, and when any controversy became popular, he never wanted some reason for engaging in it with

great ardour, and appearing at the head of the party which he had chosen. As he was never celebrated for his prudence, he had no sooner taken his side, and informed himself of the chief topics of the dispute, than he took all opportunities of asserting and propagating his principles, without much regard to his own interest, or any other visible design than that of drawing upon himself the attention of mankind.

The dispute between the Bishop of London and the Chancellor is well known to have been for some time the chief topic of political conversation, and therefore Mr. Savage, in pursuance of his character, endeavoured to become conspicuous among the controvertists with which every coffee-house was filled on that occasion. He was an indefatigable opposer of all the claims of ecclesiastical power, though he did not know on what they were founded, and was therefore no friend to the Bishop of London. But he had another reason for appearing as a warm advocate for Dr. Rundle, for he was the friend of Mr. Foster and Mr. Thompson, who were the friends of Mr. Savage.

Thus remote was his interest in the question, which however, as he imagined, concerned him so nearly, that it was not sufficient to harangue and dispute, but necessary likewise to write upon it.

He therefore engaged with great ardour in a new Poem, called by him, *THE PROGRESS OF A DIVINE**, in which he conducts a profligate priest by all the gradations of wickedness from a poor curacy in the country, to the highest preferments of the church, and describes with that humour which was natural to him, and that knowledge which was extended to all the diversities of human life, his behaviour in every station, and insinuates, that this priest, thus accom-

* Vol. II. p. III.

plished,

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plished, found at last a patron in the Bishop of London.

When he was asked by one of his friends, on what pretence he could charge the Bishop with such an action, he had no more to say, than that he had only inverted the accusation, and that he thought it reasonable to believe, that he, who obstructed the rise of a good man without reason, would for bad reasons promote the exaltation of a villain.

The clergy were universally provoked by this satire, and Savage, who, as was his constant practice, had set his name to his performance, was censured in *THE WEEKLY MISCELLANY* † with severity, which he did not seem inclined to forget.

† A short satire was likewise published in the same paper, in which were the following lines :

For cruel murder doom'd to hempen death,
Savage, by royal grace, prolong'd his breath.
Well might you think he spent his future years
In pray'r, and fasting, and repentant tears.
—But, O vain hope!—the truly Savage cries,
' Priests, and their slavish doctrines, I despise.
' Shall I

' Who, by free thinking to free action fir'd,
' In midnight brawls a deathless name acquir'd,
' Now stoop to learn of ecclesiastic men?—
' —No, arm'd with rhyme, at priests I'll take my aim,
' Though prudence bids me murder but their fame.

} *WEEKLY MISCELLANY.*

An answer was published in *THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE*, written by an unknown hand, from which the following lines are selected :

Transform'd by thoughtless rage, and midnight wine,
From malice free, and push'd without design;
In equal brawl if Savage lung'd a thrust,
And brought the youth a victim to the dust;
So strong the hand of accident appears,
The royal hand from guilt and vengeance clears.

But a return of invective was not thought a sufficient punishment. The Court of King's Bench was therefore moved against him, and he was obliged to return an answer to a charge of obscenity. It was urged in his defence, that obscenity was criminal when it was intended to promote the practice of vice, but that Mr. Savage had only introduced obscene ideas, with the view of exposing them to detestation, and of amending the age, by shewing the deformity of wickedness. This plea was admitted, and Sir Philip Yorke, who then presided in that court, dismissed the information with encomiums upon the purity and excellence of Mr. Savage's writings.

The prosecution, however, answered in some measure the purpose of those by whom it was set on foot; for Mr. Savage was so far intimidated by it, that when the edition of his poem was sold, he did not venture to reprint it; so that it was in a short time

Instead of wasting 'all thy future years,
'Savage, in pray'r and vain repentant tears;
Exert thy pen to mend a vicious age,
To curb the priest, and sink his high-church rage;
To shew what frauds the holy vestments hide,
'The nests of av'rice, lust, and pedant pride;
Then change the scene, let merit brightly shine,
And round the patriot twist the wreath divine;
The heav'nly guide deliver down to fame;
In well-tun'd lays transmit a Foster's name.
Touch every passion with harmonious art,
Exalt the genius, and correct the heart.
Thus future times shall royal grace extol;
Thus polish'd lines thy present fame enrol.

—But grant—

—Maliciously that Savage plung'd the steel,
And made the youth its shining vengeance feel;
My soul abhors the act, the man detests,
But more the bigotry in priestly breasts.

GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, May 1735.

forgotten,

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forgotten, or forgotten by all but those whom it offended.

It is said, that some endeavours were used to incense the Queen against him, but he found advocates to obviate at least part of their effect; for though he was never advanced, he still continued to receive his pension.

This poem drew more infamy upon him than any incident of his life, and as his conduct cannot be vindicated, it is proper to secure his memory from reproach, by informing those whom he made his enemies, that he never intended to repeat the provocation; and that, though whenever he thought he had any reason to complain of the clergy, he used to threaten them with a new edition of *THE PROGRESS OF A DIVINE*, it was his calm and settled resolution to suppress it for ever.

He once intended to have made a better reparation for the folly or injustice with which he might be charged, by writing another poem, called, *THE PROGRESS OF A FREETHINKER*, whom he intended to lead through all the stages of vice and folly, to convert him from virtue to wickedness, and from religion to infidelity, by all the modish sophistry used for that purpose: and at last to dismiss him by his own hand into the other world.

That he did not execute this design is a real loss to mankind, for he was too well acquainted with all the scenes of debauchery to have failed in his representations of them, and too zealous for virtue not to have represented them in such a manner as should expose them either to ridicule or detestation.

But this plan was like others, formed and laid aside, till the vigour of his imagination was spent, and the effervescence of invention had subsided, but soon gave way to some other design, which pleased

by its novelty for a while, and then was neglected like the former.

He was still in his usual exigencies, having no certain support but the pension allowed him by the Queen, which, though it might have kept an exact economist from want, was very far from being sufficient for Mr. Savage, who had never been accustomed to dismiss any of his appetites without the gratification which they solicited, and whom nothing but want of money withheld from partaking of every pleasure that fell within his view.

His conduct with regard to his pension was very particular. No sooner had he changed the bill, than he vanished from the sight of all his acquaintances, and lay for some time out of the reach of all the enquiries that friendship or curiosity could make after him; at length he appeared again penniless as before, but never informed even those whom he seemed to regard most, where he had been, nor was his retreat ever discovered.

This was his constant practice during the whole time that he received the pension from the Queen: He regularly disappeared and returned. He indeed affirmed, that he retired to study, and that the money supported him in solitude for many months; but his friends declared, that the short time in which it was spent sufficiently confuted his own account of his conduct.

His politeness and his wit still raised him friends, who were desirous of setting him at length free from that indigence by which he had been hitherto oppressed, and therefore solicited Sir Robert Walpole in his favour with so much earnestness, that they obtained a promise of the next place that should become vacant, not exceeding two hundred pounds a year. This promise was made with an uncommon declaration,

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tion, ' that it was not the promise of a minister to a petitioner, but of a friend to his friend.'

Mr. Savage now concluded himself set at ease for ever, and as he observes in a poem * written on that incident of his life, trusted and was trusted, but soon found that his confidence was ill-grounded, and this friendly promise was not inviolable. He spent a long time in sollicitations, and at last despaired and desisted.

He did not indeed deny that he had given the minister some reason to believe that he should not strengthen his own interest by advancing him, for he had taken care to distinguish himself in coffee-houses as an advocate for the ministry of the last years of Queen Anne, and was always ready to justify the conduct, and exalt the character of Lord Bolingbroke, whom he mentions with great regard in an epistle upon authors, which he wrote about that time, but was too wise to publish, and of which only some fragments † have appeared, inserted by him in the *MAGAZINE* after his retirement.

To despair was not, however, the character of Savage; when one patronage failed, he had recourse to another. The prince was now extremely popular, and had very liberally rewarded the merit of some writers, whom Mr. Savage did not think superior to himself, and therefore he resolved to address a poem to him.

For this purpose he made choice of a subject, which could regard only persons of the highest rank and greatest affluence, and which was therefore proper for a poem intended to procure the patronage of a prince; and having retired for some time to Richmond, that he might prosecute his design in full tranquillity, without the temptations of pleasure, or the sollicita-

* Vol. II. p. 173.

† Ibid. p. 202.

tions of creditors, by which his meditations were in equal danger of being disconcerted, he produced a poem *ON PUBLIC SPIRIT, WITH REGARD TO PUBLIC WORKS* *.

The plan of this poem is very extensive, and comprises a multitude of topics, each of which might furnish matter sufficient for a long performance, and of which some have already employed more eminent writers; but as he was perhaps not fully acquainted with the whole extent of his own design, and was writing to obtain a supply of wants too pressing to admit of long or accurate enquiries, he passes negligently over many public works, which, even in his own opinion, deserved to be more elaborately treated.

But though he may sometimes disappoint his reader by transient touches upon these subjects, which have often been considered, and therefore naturally raise expectations, he must be allowed amply to compensate his omissions, by expatiating in the conclusion of his work upon a kind of beneficence not yet celebrated by any eminent poet, though it now appears more susceptible of embellishments, more adapted to exalt the ideas, and affect the passions, than many of those which have hitherto been thought most worthy of the ornaments of verse. The settlement of colonies in uninhabited countries, the establishment of those in security, whose misfortunes have made their own country no longer pleasing or safe, the acquisition of property without injury to any, the appropriation of the waste and luxuriant bounties of nature, and the enjoyment of those gifts which heaven has scattered upon regions uncultivated and unoccupied, cannot be considered without giving rise to a great number of pleasing ideas, and bewildering the imagination in delightful prospects; and, therefore, whatever specula-

* Vol. II. p. 131.

tions they may produce in those who have confined themselves to political studies, naturally fixed the attention and excited the applause of a poet. The politician, when he considers men driven into other countries for shelter, and obliged to retire to forests and deserts, and pass their lives and fix their posterity in the remotest corners of the world, to avoid those hardships which they suffer or fear in their native place, may very properly enquire why the legislature does not provide a remedy for these miseries, rather than encourage an escape from them. He may conclude, that the flight of every honest man is a loss to the community, that those who are unhappy without guilt ought to be relieved, and the life, which is overburthened by accidental calamities, set at ease by the care of the public; and that those, who have by misconduct forfeited their claim to favour, ought rather to be made useful to the society which they have injured, than be driven from it. But the poet is employed in a more pleasing undertaking than that of proposing laws, which, however just or expedient, will never be made, or endeavouring to reduce to rational schemes of government societies which were formed by chance, and are conducted by the private passions of those who preside in them. He guides the unhappy fugitive from want and persecution, to plenty, quiet, and security, and seats him in scenes of peaceful solitude, and undisturbed repose.

Savage has not forgotten, amidst the pleasing sentiments which this prospect of retirement suggested to him, to censure those crimes which have been generally committed by the discoverers of new regions, and to expose the enormous wickedness of making war upon barbarous nations because they cannot resist, and of invading countries because they are fruitful; of extending navigation only to propagate vice, and of
visiting

visiting distant lands only to lay them waste. He has asserted the natural equality of mankind, and endeavoured to suppress that pride which inclines men to imagine that right is the consequence of power*.

His description of the various miseries which force men to seek for refuge in distant countries, affords another instance of his proficiency in the important and extensive study of human life, and the tenderness with which he recounts them, another proof of his humanity and benevolence.

It is observable, that the close of this poem discovers a change which experience had made in Mr. Savage's opinions. In a poem written by him in his youth, and published in his *Miscellanies*, he declares his contempt of the contracted views and narrow prospects of the middle state of life, and declares his resolution either to tower like the cedar, or be trampled like the shrub; but in this poem, though addressed to a prince, he mentions this state of life as comprising those who ought most to attract reward, those who merit most the confidence of power, and the familiarity of greatness, and accidentally mentioning this passage to one of his friends, declared, that in his opinion all the virtue of mankind was comprehended in that state.

In describing villas and gardens, he did not omit to condemn that absurd custom which prevails among the English of permitting servants to receive money from strangers for the entertainment that they receive, and therefore inserted in his poem these lines:

But what the flow'ring pride of gardens rare,
However royal, or however fair,
If gates, which to access should still give way,
Ope but, like Peter's paradise, for pay?

* Vol. II. p. 141.

If

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If perquisted varlets frequent stand,
And each new walk must a new tax demand?
What foreign eye but with contempt surveys?
What muse shall from oblivion snatch their praise?

But before the publication of his performance he recollected, that the Queen allowed her garden and cave at Richmond to be shewn for money, and that she so openly countenanced the practice, that she had bestowed the privilege of shewing them as a place of profit on a man, whose merit she valued herself upon rewarding, though she gave him only the liberty of disgracing his country.

He therefore thought, with more prudence than was often exerted by him, that the publication of these lines might be officiously represented as an insult upon the Queen, to whom he owed his life and his subsistence, and that the propriety of his observation would be no security against the censures which the unseasonableness of it might draw upon him; he therefore suppressed the passage in the first edition, but after the Queen's death thought the same caution no longer necessary, and restored it to the proper place.

The poem was therefore published without any political faults, and inscribed to the Prince; but Mr. Savage, having no friend upon whom he could prevail to present it to him, had no other method of attracting his observation than the publication of frequent advertisements, and therefore received no reward from his patron, however generous on other occasions.

This disappointment he never mentioned without indignation, being by some means or other confident that the Prince was not ignorant of his address to him, and insinuated, that if any advances in popularity could have been made by distinguishing him, he had not written without notice, or without reward.

He

He was once inclined to have presented his poem in person, and sent to the printer for a copy with that design; but either his opinion changed, or his resolution deserted him, and he continued to resent neglect without attempting to force himself into regard.

Nor was the public much more favourable than his patron, for only seventy-two were sold, though the performance was much commended by some whose judgment in that kind of writing is generally allowed. But Savage easily reconciled himself to mankind without imputing any defect to his work, by observing that his poem was unluckily published two days after the prorogation of the parliament, and by consequence at a time when all those who could be expected to regard it were in the hurry of preparing for their departure, or engaged in taking leave of others upon their dismissal from public affairs.

It must be however allowed, in justification of the public, that this performance is not the most excellent of Mr. Savage's works, and that though it cannot be denied to contain many striking sentiments, majestic lines, and just observations, it is in general not sufficiently polished in the language, or enlivened in the imagery, or digested in the plan.

Thus his poem contributed nothing to the alleviation of his poverty, which was such as very few could have supported with equal patience, but to which it must likewise be confessed, that few would have been exposed who received punctually fifty pounds a year; a salary which though by no means equal to the demands of vanity and luxury, is yet found sufficient to support families above want, and was undoubtedly more than the necessities of life require.

But no sooner had he received his pension, than he withdrew to his darling privacy, from which he returned in a short time to his former distress, and for
some

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Some part of the year generally lived by chance, eating only when he was invited to the tables of his acquaintances, from which the meanness of his dress often excluded him, when the politeness and variety of his conversation would have been thought a sufficient recompence for his entertainment.

He lodged as much by accident as he dined, and passed the night, sometimes in mean houses, which are set open at night to any casual wanderers, sometimes in cellars among the riot and filth of the meanest and most profligate of the rabble; and sometimes, when he had not money to support even the expences of these receptacles, walked about the streets till he was weary, and lay down in the summer upon a bulk, or in the winter with his associates in poverty, among the ashes of a glass-house.

In this manner were passed those days and those nights which nature had enabled him to have employed in elevated speculations, useful studies, or pleasing conversation. On a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glass-house among thieves and beggars, was to be found the Author of *THE WANDERER*, the man of exalted sentiments, extensive views, and curious observations; the man whose remarks on life might have assisted the statesman, whose ideas of virtue might have enlightened the moralist, whose eloquence might have influenced senates, and whose delicacy might have polished courts.

It cannot be imagined that such necessities might sometimes force him upon disreputable practices; and it is probable that these lines in *THE WANDERER* were occasioned by his reflections on his own conduct.

Tho' mis'ry leads to happiness, and truth,
Unequal to the load, this languid youth,

(O, let

(O, let none censure, if, untried by grief,
If, amidst woe, untempted by relief.)
He stoop'd reluctant to low arts of shame,
Which then, e'en then he scorn'd, and blush'd to name.

Whoever was acquainted with him was certain to be solicited for small sums, which the frequency of the request made in time considerable, and he was therefore quickly shunned by those who were become familiar enough to be trusted with his necessities; but his rambling manner of life, and constant appearance at houses of public resort, always procured him a new succession of friends, whose kindness had not been exhausted by repeated requests, so that he was seldom absolutely without resources, but had in his utmost exigences this comfort, that he always imagined himself sure of speedy relief.

It was observed that he always asked favours of this kind without the least submission or apparent consciousness of dependence, and that he did not seem to look upon a compliance with his request as an obligation that deserved any extraordinary acknowledgments, but a refusal was resented by him as an affront, or complained of as an injury; nor did he readily reconcile himself to those who either denied to lend, or gave him afterwards any intimation, that they expected to be repaid.

He was sometimes so far compassionated by those who knew both his merit and distresses, that they received him into their families, but they soon discovered him to be a very incommodious inmate; for being always accustomed to an irregular manner of life, he could not confine himself to any stated hours, or pay any regard to the rules of a family, but would prolong his conversation till midnight, without considering that business might require his friend's application

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cation in the morning; and when he had persuaded himself to retire to bed, was not, without equal difficulty, called up to dinner; it was therefore impossible to pay him any distinction without the entire subversion of all oeconomy, a kind of establishment which, wherever he went, he always appeared ambitious to overthrow.

It must therefore be acknowledged, in justification of mankind, that it was not always by the negligence or coldness of his friends that Savage was distressed, but because it was in reality very difficult to preserve him long in a state of ease. To supply him with money was a hopeless attempt, for no sooner did he see himself master of a sum sufficient to set him free from care for a day, than he became profuse and luxurious. When once he had entered a tavern, or engaged in a scheme of pleasure, he never retired till want of money obliged him to some new expedient. If he was entertained in a family, nothing was any longer to be regarded there but amusements and jollity; wherever Savage entered he immediately expected that order and business should fly before him, that all should thenceforward be left to hazard, and that no dull principle of domestic management should be opposed to his inclination, or intrude upon his gaiety.

His distresses, however afflictive, never dejected him; in his lowest state he wanted not spirit to assert the natural dignity of wit, and was always ready to repress that insolence which superiority of fortune incited, and to trample that reputation which rose upon any other basis than that of merit: he never admitted any gross familiarities, or submitted to be treated otherwise than as an equal. Once, when he was without lodging, meat, or cloaths, one of his friends, a man not indeed remarkable for moderation

in his prosperity, left a message, that he desired to see him about nine in the morning. Savage knew that his intention was to assist him, but was very much disgusted that he should presume to prescribe the hour of his attendance, and, I believe, refused to visit him, and rejected his kindness.

The same invincible temper, whether firmness or obstinacy, appeared in his conduct to the Lord Tyrconnel, from whom he very frequently demanded that the allowance which was once paid him should be restored, but with whom he never appeared to entertain for a moment the thought of soliciting a reconciliation, and whom he treated at once with all the haughtiness of superiority, and all the bitterness of resentment. He wrote to him not in a style of supplication or respect, but of reproach, menace and contempt; and appeared determined, if he ever regained his allowance, to hold it only by the right of conquest.

As many more can discover, that a man is richer than that he is wiser than themselves, superiority of understanding is not so readily acknowledged as that of fortune; nor is that haughtiness, which the consciousness of great abilities incites, borne with the same submission as the tyranny of affluence; and therefore Savage, by asserting his claim to deference and regard, and by treating those with contempt whom better fortune animated to rebel against him, did not fail to raise a great number of enemies in the different classes of mankind. Those who thought themselves raised above him by the advantages of riches, hated him because they found no protection from the petulance of his wit. Those who were esteemed for their writings feared him as a critic, and maligned him as a rival, and almost all the smaller wits were his professed enemies.

Among

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Among these Mr. Millar so far indulged his resentment as to introduce him in a farce, and direct him to be personated on the stage in a dress like that which he then wore; a mean insult, which only insinuated that Savage had but one coat, and which was therefore despised by him rather than resented; for though he wrote a lampoon against Millar, he never printed it: and as no other person ought to prosecute that revenge from which the person who was injured desisted, I shall not preserve what Mr. Savage suppressed; of which the publication would indeed have been a punishment too severe for so impotent an assault.

The great hardships of poverty were to Savage not the want of lodging or of food, but the neglect and contempt which it drew upon him. He complained that as his affairs grew desperate, he found his reputation for capacity visibly decline; that his opinion in questions of criticism was no longer regarded, when his coat was out of fashion; and that those who in the interval of his prosperity were always encouraging him to great undertakings by encomiums on his genius and assurances of success, now received any mention of his designs with coldness, thought that the subjects on which he proposed to write were very difficult; and were ready to inform him, that the event of a poem was uncertain, that an author ought to employ much time in the consideration of his plan, and not presume to sit down to write in confidence of a few cursory ideas, and a superficial knowledge; difficulties were started on all sides, and he was no longer qualified for any performance but *THE VOLUNTEER LAUREAT*.

Yet even this kind of contempt never depressed him; for he always preserved a steady confidence in his own capacity, and believed nothing above his reach which he should at any time earnestly endeavour

to attain. He formed schemes of the same kind with regard to knowledge and to fortune, and flattered himself with advances to be made in science, as with riches to be enjoyed in some distant period of his life. For the acquisition of knowledge he was indeed far better qualified than for that of riches; for he was naturally inquisitive and desirous of the conversation of those from whom any information was to be obtained, but by no means solicitous to improve those opportunities that were sometimes offered of raising his fortune; and he was remarkably retentive of his ideas, which, when once he was in possession of them, rarely forsook him; a quality which could never be communicated to his money.

While he was thus wearing out his life in expectation that the Queen would some time recollect her promise, he had recourse to the usual practice of writers, and published proposals for printing his works by subscription, to which he was encouraged by the success of many who had not a better right to the favour of the public; but whatever was the reason he did not find the world equally inclined to favour him, and he observed with some discontent, that though he offered his works at half a guinea, he was able to procure but a small number in comparison with those who subscribed twice as much to Duck.

Nor was it without indignation that he saw his proposals neglected by the Queen, who patronised Mr. Duck's with uncommon ardour, and incited a competition among those who attended the court, who should most promote his interest, and who should first offer a subscription. This was a distinction to which Mr. Savage made no scruple of asserting that his birth, his misfortunes, and his genius gave him a fairer title than could be pleaded by him on whom it was conferred.

Savage's

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Savage's applications were however not universally unsuccessful; for some of the nobility countenanced his design, encouraged his proposals, and subscribed with great liberality. He related of the Duke of Chandos particularly, that, upon receiving his proposals, he sent him ten guineas.

But the money which his subscriptions afforded him was not less volatile than that which he received from his other schemes; whenever a subscription was paid him he went to a tavern, and as money so collected is necessarily received in small sums, he never was able to send his poems to the press, but for many years continued his solicitation, and squandered whatever he obtained.

This project of printing his works was frequently revived, and as his proposals grew obsolete, new ones were printed with fresher dates. To form schemes for the publication was one of his favourite amusements, nor was he ever more at ease than when with any friend who readily fell in with his schemes, he was adjusting the print, forming the advertisements, and regulating the dispersion of his new edition, which he really intended some time to publish, and which, as long as experience had shewn him the impossibility of printing the volume together, he at last determined to divide into weekly or monthly numbers, that the profits of the first might supply the expences of the next.

Thus he spent his time in mean expedients and tormenting suspense, living for the greatest part in fear of prosecutions from his creditors, and consequently skulking in obscure parts of the town, of which he was no stranger to the remotest corners. But wherever he came his address secured him friends, whom his necessities soon alienated, so that he had perhaps a more numerous acquaintance than any man

ever before attained, there being scarcely any person eminent on any account to whom he was not known, or whose character he was not in some degree able to delineate.

To the acquisition of this extensive acquaintance every circumstance of his life contributed. He excelled in the arts of conversation, and therefore willingly practised them: He had seldom any home, or even a lodging in which he could be private, and therefore was driven into public-houses for the common conveniences of life, and supports of nature. He was always ready to comply with every invitation, having no employment to with-hold him, and often no money to provide for himself; and by dining with one company, he never failed of obtaining an introduction into another.

Thus dissipated was his life, and thus casual his subsistence; yet did not the distraction of his views hinder him from reflection, nor the uncertainty of his condition depress his gaiety. When he had wandered about without any fortunate adventure by which he was led into a tavern, he sometimes retired into the fields, and was able to employ his mind in study, or amuse it with pleasing imaginations; and seldom appeared to be melancholy, but when some sudden misfortune had just fallen upon him, and even then in a few moments he would disentangle himself from his perplexity, adopt the subject of conversation, and apply his mind wholly to the objects that others presented to it.

This life, unhappy as it may be already imagined, was yet imbittered in 1738, with new calamities. The death of the Queen deprived him of all the prospects of preferment with which he so long entertained his imagination; and as Sir Robert Walpole had before given him reason to believe that he never intended

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intended the performance of his promise, he was now abandoned again to fortune.

He was however, at that time, supported by a friend; and as it was not his custom to look out for distant calamities, or to feel any other pain than that which forced itself upon his senses, he was not much afflicted at his loss, and perhaps comforted himself that his pension would be now continued without the annual tribute of a panegyric.

Another expectation contributed likewise to support him: he had taken a resolution to write a second tragedy upon the story of Sir Thomas Overbury, in which he preserved a few lines of his former play; but made a total alteration of the plan, added new incidents, and introduced new characters; so that it was a new tragedy, not a revival of the former.

Many of his friends blamed him for not making choice of another subject; but in vindication of himself, he asserted, that it was not easy to find a better; and that he thought it his interest to extinguish the memory of the first tragedy, which he could only do by writing one less defective upon the same story; by which he should entirely defeat the artifice of the booksellers, who after the death of any author of reputation, are always industrious to swell his works, by uniting his worst productions with his best.

In the execution of this scheme however, he proceeded but slowly, and probably only employed himself upon it when he could find no other amusement; but he pleased himself with counting the profits, and perhaps imagined, that the theatrical reputation which he was about to acquire, would be equivalent to all that he had lost by the death of his patrons.

He did not, in confidence of his approaching riches, neglect the measures proper to secure the continuance of his pension, though some of his fa-

vourers thought him culpable for omitting to write on her death; but on her birth-day next year, he gave a proof of the solidity of his judgment, and the power of his genius. He knew that the track of elegy had been so long beaten, that it was impossible to travel in it without treading in the footsteps of those who had gone before him; and that therefore it was necessary, that he might distinguish himself from the herd of encomiasts, to find out some new walk of funeral panegyric.

This difficult task he performed in such a manner, that his poem may be justly ranked among the best pieces that the death of princes has produced. By transferring the mention of her death to her birth-day, he has formed a happy combination of topics, which any other man would have thought it very difficult to connect in one view; but which he has united in such a manner, that the relation between them appears natural; and it may be justly said, that what no other man would have thought on, it now appears scarcely possible for any man to miss.*

The beauty of this peculiar combination of images is so masterly, that it is sufficient to set this poem above censure; and therefore it is not necessary to mention many other delicate touches which may be found in it, and which would deservedly be admired in any other performance.

To these proofs of his genius may be added, from the same poem, an instance of his prudence, an excellence for which he was not so often distinguished; he does not forget † to remind the King in the most delicate and artful manner of continuing his pension.

With regard to the success of this address, he was for some time in suspense; but was in no great de-

* Vol. II. p. 227.

† Vol. II. p. 129.

gree solicitous about it; and continued his labour upon his new tragedy with great tranquillity, till the friend, who had for a considerable time supported him, removing his family to another place, took occasion to dismiss him. It then became necessary to enquire more diligently what was determined in his affair, having reason to suspect that no great favour was intended him, because he had not received his pension at the usual time.

It is said, that he did not take those methods of retrieving his interest, which were most likely to succeed; and some of those who were employed in the Exchequer, cautioned him against too much violence in his proceedings; but Mr. Savage, who seldom regulated his conduct by the advice of others, gave way to his passion, and demanded of Sir Robert Walpole, at his levee, the reason of the distinction that was made between him and the other pensioners of the Queen, with a degree of roughness, which perhaps determined him to withdraw what had been only delayed.

Whatever was the crime of which he was accused or suspected, and whatever influence was employed against him, he received soon after an account that took from him all hopes of regaining his pension; and he had now no prospect of subsistence but from his play, and he knew no way of living for the time required to finish it.

So peculiar were the misfortunes of this man, deprived of an estate and title by a particular law, exposed and abandoned by a mother, defrauded by a mother of a fortune which his father had allotted him, he entered the world without a friend; and though his abilities forced themselves into esteem and reputation, he was never able to obtain any real advantage, and whatever prospects arose, were always intercepted

intercepted as he began to approach them. The King's intentions in his favour were frustrated; his Dedication * to the Prince, whose generosity on every other occasion was eminent, procured him no reward; Sir Robert Walpole, who valued himself upon keeping his promise to others, broke it to him without regret; and the bounty of the Queen was, after her death, withdrawn from him, and from him only.

Such were his misfortunes, which yet he bore not only with decency, but with cheerfulness, nor was his gaiety clouded even by his last disappointments, though he was in a short time reduced to the lowest degree of distress; and often wanted both lodging and food. At this time he gave another instance of the insurmountable obstinacy of his spirit; his cloaths were worn out, and he received notice, that at a coffee-house some cloaths and linen were left for him; the person who sent them, did not, I believe, inform him to whom he was to be obliged, that he might spare the perplexity of acknowledging the benefit; but though the offer was so far generous, it was made with some neglect of ceremonies, which Mr. Savage so much resented, that he refused the present, and declined to enter the house, till the cloaths that had been designed for him were taken away.

His distress was now publickly known, and his friends, therefore, thought it proper to concert some measures for his relief; and one of them wrote a letter to him, in which he expressed his concern 'for the miserable withdrawing of his pension;' and gave him hopes, that in a short time he should find himself supplied with a competence, 'without any dependance on those little creatures which we are pleased to call the Great.'

* Vol. II. p. 229.

The scheme proposed for this happy and independent subsistence, was, that he should retire into Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raised by a subscription, on which he was to live privately in a cheap place, without aspiring any more to affluence, or having any farther care of reputation.

This offer Mr. Savage gladly accepted, though with intentions very different from those of his friends; for they proposed that he should continue an exile from London for ever, and spend all the remaining part of his life at Swansea; but he designed only to take the opportunity, which their scheme offered him, of retreating for a short time, that he might prepare his play for the stage, and his other works for the press, and then to return to London to exhibit his tragedy, and live upon the profits of his own labour.

With regard to his works, he proposed very great improvements, which would have required much time, or great application; and when he had finished them, he designed to do justice to his subscribers, by publishing them according to his proposals.

As he was ready to entertain himself with future pleasures, he had planned out a scheme of life for the country, of which he had no knowledge but from pastorals and songs. He imagined that he should be transported to scenes of flowery felicity, like those which one poet has reflected to another, and had projected a perpetual round of innocent pleasures of which he suspected no interruption from pride, or ignorance, or brutality.

With these expectations he was so enchanted, that when he was once gently reproached by a friend for submitting to live upon a subscription, and advised rather by a resolute exertion of his abilities to support

port himself, he could not bear to debar himself from the happiness which was to be found in the calm of a cottage, or lose the opportunity of listening, without intermission, to the melody of the nightingale, which he believed was to be heard from every bramble, and which he did not fail to mention as a very important part of the happiness of a country life.

While this scheme was ripening, his friends directed him to take a lodging in the liberties of the Fleet, that he might be secure from his creditors, and sent him every Monday a guinea, which he commonly spent before the next morning, and trusted, after his usual manner, the remaining part of the week to the bounty of fortune.

He now began very sensibly to feel the miseries of dependance: Those by whom he was to be supported, began to prescribe to him with an air of authority, which he knew not how decently to resent, nor patiently to bear; and he soon discovered from the conduct of most of his subscribers, that he was yet in the hands of 'Little creatures.'

Of the insolence that he was obliged to suffer, he gave many instances, of which none appeared to raise his indignation to a greater height, than the method which was taken of furnishing him with cloaths. Instead of consulting him, and allowing him to send a tailor his orders for what they thought proper to allow him, they proposed to send for a tailor to take his measure, and then to consult how they should equip him.

This treatment was not very delicate, nor was it such as Savage's humanity would have suggested to him on a like occasion; but it had scarcely deserved mention, had it not, by affecting him in an uncommon degree, shewn the peculiarity of his character.

Upon

Upon hearing the design that was formed, he came to the lodging of a friend with the most violent agonies of rage; and being asked what it could be that gave him such disturbance, he replied with the utmost vehemence of indignation, 'That they had sent for a tailor to measure him.'

How the affair ended was never enquired, for fear of renewing his uneasiness. It is probable, that, upon recollection, he submitted with a good grace to what he could not avoid, and that he discovered no resentment where he had no power.

He was, however, not humbled to implicit and universal compliance; for when the gentleman, who had first informed him of the design to support him by a subscription, attempted to procure a reconciliation with the Lord Tyrconnel, he could by no means be prevailed upon to comply with the measures that were proposed.

A letter was written for him * to Sir William Lemon, to prevail upon him to interpose his good offices with Lord Tyrconnel, in which he solicited Sir William's assistance, 'for a man who really needed it as much as any man could well do;' and informed him, that he was retiring 'for ever to a place where he should no more trouble his relations, friends, or enemies;' he confessed, that his passion had betrayed him to some conduct with regard to Lord Tyrconnel, 'for which he could not but heartily ask his pardon;' and as he imagined Lord Tyrconnel's passion might be yet so high, that he would not 'receive a letter from him,' begged that Sir William would endeavour to soften him; and expressed his hopes that he would comply with his request, and that 'so small a relation would not harden his heart against him.'

* By Mr. Pope.

That

That any man should presume to dictate a letter to him, was not very agreeable to Mr. Savage; and therefore he was, before he had opened it, not much inclined to approve it. But when he read it, he found it contained sentiments entirely opposite to his own; and, as he asserted, to the truth; and therefore instead of copying it, wrote his friend a letter full of masculine resentment and warm expostulations. He very justly observed, that the style was too supplicatory, and the representation too abject, and that he ought at least to have made him complain with 'the dignity of a gentleman in distress.' He declared that he would not write the paragraph in which he was to ask Lord Tyrconnel's pardon; for 'he despised his pardon, and therefore could not heartily, and would not hypocritically, ask it.' He remarked, that his friend made a very unreasonable distinction between himself and him; for, says he, when you mention men of high rank 'in your own character,' they are 'those little creatures whom we are pleased to call the great;' but when you address them 'in mine,' no servility is sufficiently humble. He then with great propriety explained the ill consequences which might be expected from such a letter, which his relations would print in their own defence, and which would for ever be produced as a full answer to all that he should allege against them; for he always intended to publish a minute account of the treatment which he had received. It is to be remembered, to the honour of the gentleman by whom this letter was drawn up, that he yielded to Mr. Savage's reasons, and agreed that it ought to be suppressed.

After many alterations and delays, a subscription was at length raised which did not amount to fifty pounds a year, though twenty were paid by one gentleman;

gentleman; such was the generosity of mankind, that what had been done by a player without solicitation, could not now be effected by application and interest; and Savage had a great number to court and to obey for a pension less than that which Mrs. Oldfield paid him without exacting any servilities.

Mr. Savage however was satisfied, and willing to retire, and was convinced that the allowance, though scanty, would be more than sufficient for him, being now determined to commence a rigid economist, and to live according to the exactest rules of frugality; for nothing was in his opinion more contemptible than a man, who, when he knew his income, exceeded it; and yet he confessed, that instances of such folly were too common, and lamented that some men were not to be trusted with their own money.

Full of these salutary resolutions, he left London in July 1739, having taken leave with great tenderness of his friends, and parted from the Author of this Narrative with tears in his eyes. He was furnished with fifteen guineas, and informed, that they would be sufficient, not only for the expence of his journey, but for his support in Wales for some time; and that there remained but little more of the first collection. He promised a strict adherence to his maxims of parsimony, and went away in the stage-coach; nor did his friends expect to hear from him, till he informed them of his arrival at Swansea.

But when they least expected, arrived a letter dated the fourteenth day after his departure, in which he sent them word, that he was yet upon the road, and without money; and that he therefore could not proceed without a remittance. They then sent him the money that was in their hands, with which he was enabled to reach Bristol, from whence he was to go to Swansea by water.

At

At Bristol he found an embargo laid upon the shipping, so that he could not immediately obtain a passage; and being therefore obliged to stay there some time, he, with his usual felicity, ingratiated himself with many of the principal inhabitants, was invited to their houses, distinguished at their public feasts, and treated with a regard that gratified his vanity, and therefore easily engaged his affection.

He began very early after his retirement to complain of the conduct of his friends in London, and irritated many of them so much by his letters, that they withdrew, however honourably, their contributions; and it is believed, that little more was paid him than the twenty pounds a year, which were allowed him by the gentleman who proposed the subscription.

After some stay at Bristol he retired to Swansea, the place originally proposed for his residence, where he lived about a year very much dissatisfied with the diminution of his salary; but contracted, as in other places, acquaintance with those who were most distinguished in that country, among whom he has celebrated Mr. Powel * and Mrs. Jones †, by some verses which he inserted in *THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE*.

Here he completed his tragedy, of which two acts were wanting when he left London, and was desirous of coming to town to bring it upon the stage. This design was very warmly opposed, and he was advised by his chief benefactor to put it into the hands of Mr. Thomson and Mr. Mallet, that it might be fitted for the stage, and to allow his friends to receive the profits, out of which an annual pension should be paid him.

* Vol. II. p. 217. † Ibid. p. 197.

This proposal he rejected with the utmost contempt. He was by no means convinced that the judgment of those to whom he was required to submit, was superior to his own. He was now determined, as he expressed it, to be 'no longer kept in 'leading strings,' and had no elevated idea of 'his 'bounty,' who proposed to 'pension him out of the 'profits of his own labour.'

He attempted in Wales to promote a subscription for his works, and had once hopes of success; but in a short time afterwards formed a resolution of leaving that part of the country, to which he thought it not reasonable to be confined for the gratification of those, who, having promised him a liberal income, had no sooner banished him to a remote corner, than they reduced his allowance to a salary scarcely equal to the necessities of life.

His resentment of this treatment, which, in his own opinion at least, he had not deserved; was such, that he broke off all correspondence with most of his contributors, and appeared to consider them as persecutors and oppressors; and in the latter part of his life declared, that their conduct toward him, since his departure from London, 'had been perfidiousness improving on perfidiousness, and inhumanity 'on inhumanity.'

It is not to be supposed, that the necessities of Mr. Savage did not sometimes incite him to satirical exaggerations of the behaviour of those by whom he thought himself reduced to them. But it must be granted, that the diminution of his allowance was a great hardship, and that those who withdrew their subscription from a man, who, upon the faith of their promise, had gone into a kind of banishment, and abandoned all those by whom he had been be-

fore relieved in his distresses, will find it no easy task to vindicate their conduct.

It may be alleged, and perhaps justly, that he was petulant and contemptuous, that he more frequently reproached his subscribers for not giving him more, than thanked them for what he received; but it is to be remembered, that this conduct, and this is the worst charge that can be drawn up against him, did them no real injury; and that it therefore ought rather to have been pitied than resented, at least the resentment it might provoke ought to have been generous and manly; epithets which his conduct will hardly deserve that starves the man whom he has persuaded to put himself into his power.

It might have been reasonably demanded by Savage, that they should, before they had taken away what they promised, have replaced him in his former state, that they should have taken no advantages from the situation to which the appearance of their kindness had reduced him, and that he should have been recalled to London before he was abandoned. He might justly represent, that he ought to have been considered as a lion in the toils, and demand to be released before the dogs should be loosed upon him.

He endeavoured, indeed, to release himself, and with an intent to return to London, went to Bristol, where a repetition of the kindness which he had formerly found, invited him to stay. He was not only caressed and treated, but had a collection made for him of about thirty pounds, with which it had been happy if he had immediately departed for London; but his negligence did not suffer him to consider, that such proofs of kindness were not often to be expected, and that this ardour of benevolence was in a great degree the effect of novelty, and might, probably,

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bably, be every day less; and therefore he took no care to improve the happy time, but was encouraged by one favour to hope for another, till at length generosity was exhausted, and officiousness wearied.

Another part of his misconduct was the practice of prolonging his visits to unseasonable hours, and disconcerting all the families into which he was admitted. This was an error in a place of commerce which all the charms of his conversation could not compensate; for what trader would purchase such airy satisfaction by the loss of solid gain, which must be the consequence of midnight merriment, as those hours which were gained at night were generally lost in the morning?

Thus Mr. Savage, after the curiosity of the inhabitants was gratified, found the number of his friends daily decreasing, perhaps without suspecting for what reason their conduct was altered; for he still continued to harass, with his nocturnal intrusions, those that yet countenanced him, and admitted him to their houses.

But he did not spend all the time of his residence at Bristol in visits or at taverns, for he sometimes returned to his studies, and began several considerable designs. When he felt an inclination to write, he always retired from the knowledge of his friends, and lay hid in an obscure part of the suburbs, till he found himself again desirous of company, to which it is likely that intervals of absence made him more welcome.

He was always full of his design of returning to London to bring his tragedy upon the stage; but having neglected to depart with the money that was raised for him, he could not afterwards procure a sum sufficient to defray the expences of his journey; nor perhaps would a fresh supply have had any other

effect, than, by putting immediate pleasures in his power, to have driven the thoughts of his journey out of his mind.

While he was thus spending the day in contriving a scheme for the morrow, distress stole upon him by imperceptible degrees. His conduct had already wearied some of those who were at first enamoured of his conversation; but he might perhaps, still have devolved to others, whom he might have entertained with equal success, had not the decay of his cloaths made it no longer consistent with their vanity to admit him to their tables, or to associate with him in public places. He now began to find every man from home at whose house he called; and was therefore no longer able to procure the necessaries of life, but wandered about the town slighted and neglected in quest of a dinner which he did not always obtain.

To complete his misery he was pursued by the officers for small debts which he had contracted; and was therefore obliged to withdraw from the small number of friends from whom he had still reason to hope for favours. His custom was to lie in bed the greatest part of the day, and to go out in the dark with the utmost privacy, and after having paid his visit return again before morning to his lodging, which was in the garret of an obscure inn.

Being thus excluded on one hand, and confined on the other, he suffered the utmost extremities of poverty, and often fasted so long that he was seized with faintness, and had lost his appetite, not being able to bear the smell of meat, till the action of his stomach was restored by a cordial.

In this distress he received a remittance of five pounds from London, with which he provided himself a decent coat, and determined to go to London, but unhappily spent his money at a favourite tavern.

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Thus was he again confined to Bristol, where he was every day hunted by bailiffs. In this exigence he once more found a friend, who sheltered him in his house, though at the usual inconveniences with which his company was attended; for he could neither be persuaded to go to bed in the night, nor to rise in the day.

It is observable, that in these various scenes of misery, he was always disengaged and cheerful: he at some times pursued his studies, and at others continued or enlarged his epistolary correspondence, nor was he ever so far dejected as to endeavour to procure an increase of his allowance by any other methods than accusations and reproaches.

He had now no longer any hopes of assistance from his friends at Bristol, who as merchants, and by consequence sufficiently studious of profit, cannot be supposed to have looked with much compassion upon negligence and extravagance, or to think any excellence equivalent to a fault of such consequence as neglect of economy. It is natural to imagine, that many of those who would have relieved his real wants, were discouraged from the exertion of their benevolence by observation of the use which was made of their favours, and conviction that relief would only be momentary, and that the same necessity would quickly return.

At last he quitted the house of his friend, and returned to his lodging at the inn, still intending to set out in a few days for London; but on the 10th of January 1742-3, having been at supper with two of his friends, he was at his return to his lodgings arrested for a debt of about eight pounds, which he owed at a coffee-house, and conducted to the house of a sheriff's officer. The account which he gives of this misfortune, in a letter to one of the gentlemen

with whom he had supped, is too remarkable to be omitted.

‘ It was not a little unfortunate for me, that I spent
‘ yesterday’s evening with you ; because the hour
‘ hindered me from entering on my new lodging ;
‘ however, I have now got one, but such an one, as
‘ I believe nobody would chuse.

‘ I was arrested at the suit of Mrs. Read, just as I
‘ was going up stairs to bed, at Mr. Bowyer’s ; but
‘ taken in so private a manner, that I believe nobody
‘ at the White Lion is apprised of it. Though I let
‘ the officers know the strength (or rather weakness)
‘ of my pocket, yet they treated me with the utmost
‘ civility, and even when they conducted me to confinement, it was in such a manner, that I verily
‘ believe I could have escaped, which I would rather
‘ be ruined than have done, notwithstanding the
‘ whole amount of my finances was but three pence
‘ halfpenny.

‘ In the first place I must insist, that you will industriously conceal this from Mrs. S——s, because
‘ I would not have her goodnature suffer that pain,
‘ which, I know, she would be apt to feel on this
‘ occasion.

‘ Next, I conjure you, dear Sir, by all the ties of
‘ friendship, by no means to have one uneasy thought
‘ on my account ; but to have the same pleasantries
‘ of countenance and unruffled serenity of mind,
‘ which (God be praised !) I have in this, and have
‘ had in a much severer calamity. Furthermore, I
‘ charge you, if you value my friendship as truly as
‘ I do yours, not to utter or even harbour the least
‘ resentment against Mrs. Read. I believe she has
‘ ruined me, but I freely forgive her ; and (though
‘ I will never more have any intimacy with her)
‘ would, at a due distance, rather do her an act of
‘ good,

‘ good, than ill will. Lastly (pardon the expression),
 ‘ I absolutely command you not to offer me any pecuniary assistance, nor to attempt getting me any
 ‘ from any one of your friends. At another time,
 ‘ or on any other occasion, you may, dear friend, be
 ‘ well assured, I would rather write to you in the
 ‘ submissive style of a request, than that of a peremptory command.

‘ However, that my truly valuable friend may not
 ‘ think I am too proud to ask a favour, let me entreat you to let me have your boy to attend me for
 ‘ this day, not only for the sake of saving me the
 ‘ expence of porters, but for the delivery of some
 ‘ letters to people whose names I would not have
 ‘ known to strangers.

‘ The civil treatment I have thus far met from
 ‘ those, whose prisoner I am, makes me thankful to
 ‘ the Almighty, that, though he has thought fit to
 ‘ visit me (on my birth-night) with affliction, yet
 ‘ (such is his great goodness !) my affliction is not
 ‘ without alleviating circumstances. I murmur not,
 ‘ but am all resignation to the divine will. As to
 ‘ the world, I hope that I shall be endued by heaven
 ‘ with that presence of mind, that serene dignity
 ‘ in misfortune, that constitutes the character of a
 ‘ true nobleman ; a dignity far beyond that of coronets ; a nobility arising from the just principles of
 ‘ philosophy, refined and exalted by those of christianity.’ —

He continued five days at the officer's, in hopes that he should be able to procure bail, and avoid the necessity of going to prison. The state in which he passed his time, and the treatment which he received, are very justly expressed by him in a letter which he wrote to a friend : ‘ The whole day,’ says he, ‘ has
 ‘ been employed in various peoples’ filling my head
 ‘ with

‘ with their foolish chimerical systems, which has
‘ obliged me coolly (as far as nature will admit) to
‘ digest, and accommodate myself to, every different
‘ person’s way of thinking; hurried from one wild
‘ system to another, till it has quite made a chaos of
‘ my imagination, and nothing done—promised—
‘ disappointed—ordered to send every hour, from one
‘ part of the town to the other.’——

When his friends, who had hitherto caressed and applauded, found that to give bail and pay the debt was the same, they all refused to preserve him from a prison, at the expence of eight pounds; and therefore after having been for some time at the officer’s house, ‘ at an immense expence,’ as he observes in his letter, he was at length removed to Newgate.

This expence he was enabled to support by the generosity of Mr. Nash at Bath, who, upon receiving from him an account of his condition, immediately sent him five guineas, and promised to promote his subscription at Bath with all his interest.

By his removal to Newgate, he obtained at least a freedom from suspense, and rest from the disturbing vicissitudes of hope and disappointment; he now found that his friends were only companions, who were willing to share his gaiety, but not to partake of his misfortunes; and therefore he no longer expected any assistance from them.

It must however be observed of one gentleman, that he offered to release him by paying the debt, but that Mr. Savage would not consent, I suppose, because he thought he had been before too burthensome to him.

He was offered by some of his friends, that a collection should be made for his enlargement, but he ‘ treated the proposal,’ and declared, * ‘ that he

* In a letter after his confinement.

‘ should

‘ should again treat it, with disdain. As to writing
 ‘ any mendicant letters, he had too high a spirit,
 ‘ and determined only to write to some ministers of
 ‘ state, to try to regain his pension.’

He continued to complain * of those that had sent him into the country, and objected to them, that he had ‘ lost the profits of his play which had been
 ‘ finished three years ;’ and in another letter declares his resolution to publish a pamphlet, that the world might know how ‘ he had been used.’

This pamphlet was never written, for he in a very short time recovered his usual tranquillity, and cheerfully applied himself to more inoffensive studies. He indeed steadily declared, that he was promised a yearly allowance of fifty pounds, and never received half the sum ; but he seemed to resign himself to that as well as to other misfortunes, and lose the remembrance of it in his amusements and employments.

The cheerfulness with which he bore his confinement, appears from the following letter which he wrote, January the 30th, to one of his friends in London :

‘ I now write to you from my confinement in Newgate, where I have been ever since Monday last was
 ‘ se’en-night, and where I enjoy myself with much
 ‘ more tranquillity than I have known for upwards
 ‘ of a twelvemonth past ; having a room entirely to
 ‘ myself, and pursuing the amusement of my poetical studies, uninterrupted and agreeable to my
 ‘ mind. I thank the Almighty, I am now all collected in myself, and though my person is in confinement, my mind can expatiate on ample and
 ‘ useful subjects with all the freedom imaginable. I
 ‘ am now more conversant with the Nine than ever ;
 ‘ and if, instead of a Newgate-bird, I may be al-

* Letter January 15.

‘lowed to be a bird of the Muses, I assure you, Sir,
‘I sing very freely in my cage; sometimes indeed in
‘the plaintive notes of the nightingale; but, at
‘others, in the cheerful strains of the lark.’—

In another letter he observes, that he ranges from one subject to another, without confining himself to any particular task, and that he was employed one week upon one attempt, and the next upon another.

Surely the fortitude of this man deserves, at least, to be mentioned with applause; and whatever faults may be imputed to him, the virtue of suffering well cannot be denied him. The two powers which, in the opinion of Epictetus, constituted a wise man, are those of bearing and forbearing, which cannot indeed be affirmed to have been equally possessed by Savage; and indeed the want of one obliged him very frequently to practise the other.

He was treated by Mr. Dagg, the keeper of the prison, with great humanity; was supported by him at his own table without any certainty of recompense, had a room to himself, to which he could at any time retire from all disturbance, was allowed to stand at the door of the prison, and sometimes taken out into the fields, so that he suffered fewer hardships in prison, than he had been accustomed to undergo in the greatest part of his life.

The keeper did not confine his benevolence to a gentle execution of his office, but made some overtures to the creditor for his release, but without effect; and continued, during the whole time of his imprisonment, to treat him with the utmost tenderness and civility.

Virtue is undoubtedly most laudable in that state which makes it most difficult: and therefore the humanity of a gaoler certainly deserves this public attestation; and the man, whose heart has not been
hardened

hardened by such an employment, may be justly proposed as a pattern of benevolence. If an inscription was once engraved to the 'honest toll-gatherer,' less honours ought not to be paid 'to the tender 'gaoler.'

Mr. Savage very frequently received visits, and sometimes presents from his acquaintances, but they did not amount to a subsistence, for the greater part of which he was indebted to the generosity of this keeper; but these favours, however they might endear to him the particular persons from whom he received them, were very far from impressing upon his mind any advantageous ideas of the people of Bristol, and therefore he thought he could not more properly employ himself in prison, than in writing a poem called 'London and Bristol * delineated.'

When he had brought this poem to its present state, which, without considering the chasm, is not perfect, he wrote to London an account of his design, and informed his friend, that he was determined to print it with his name; but enjoined him not to communicate his intention to his Bristol acquaintance. The gentleman, surprised at his resolution, endeavoured to dissuade him from publishing it, at least from prefixing his name, and declared, that he could not reconcile the injunction of secrecy with his resolution to own it at its first appearance. To this Mr. Savage returned an answer agreeable to his character in the following terms:

'I received yours this morning, and not without a little surprize at the contents. To answer a question with a question, you ask me concerning 'London and Bristol, Why will I add delineated? 'Why did Mr. Woolaston add the same word to his 'RELIGION OF NATURE? I suppose that it was his

* Vol. II. p. 231.

' will

' will and pleasure to add it in his case ; and it is
 ' mine to do so in my own. You are pleased to tell
 ' me, that you understand not why secrecy is en-
 ' joined, and yet I intend to set my name to it. My
 ' answer is—I have my private reasons, which I am
 ' not obliged to explain to any one. You doubt my
 ' friend Mr. S—— would not approve of it—And
 ' what is it to me whether he does or not ? Do you
 ' imagine that Mr. S—— is to dictate to me ? If any
 ' man, who calls himself my friend, should assume
 ' such an air, I would spurn at his friendship with
 ' contempt. You say I seem to think so by not let-
 ' ting him know it—And suppose I do, what then ?
 ' Perhaps I can give reasons for that disapprobation,
 ' very foreign from what you would imagine. You
 ' go on in saying, Suppose I should not put my name
 ' to it—My answer is, that I will not suppose any
 ' such thing, being determined to the contrary ;
 ' neither, Sir, would I have you suppose, that I ap-
 ' plied to you for want of another press : Nor would
 ' I have you imagine, that I owe Mr. S—— obligations
 ' which I do not.'

Such was his imprudence, and such his obstinate
 adherence to his own resolutions, however absurd.
 A prisoner ! supported by charity ! and, whatever
 insults he might have received during the latter part
 of his stay in Bristol, once caressed, esteemed, and
 presented with a liberal collection, he could forget on
 a sudden his danger and his obligations, to gratify the
 petulance of his wit, or the eagerness of his resent-
 ment, and published a satire, by which he might rea-
 sonably expect, that he should alienate those who then
 supported him, and provoke those whom he could
 neither resist nor escape.

This resolution, from the execution of which, it
 is probable, that only his death could have hindered
 him,

him, is sufficient to shew, how much he disregarded all considerations that opposed his present passions, and how readily he hazarded all future advantages for any immediate gratifications. Whatever was his predominant inclination, neither hope nor fear hindered him from complying with it, nor had opposition any other effect than to heighten his ardour, and irritate his vehemence.

This performance was however laid aside, while he was employed in soliciting assistance from several great persons, and one interruption succeeding another, hindered him from supplying the chasm, and perhaps from retouching the other parts, which he can hardly be imagined to have finished, in his own opinion; for it is very unequal, and some of the lines are rather inserted to rhyme to others, than to support or improve the sense; but the first and last parts are worked up with great spirit and elegance.

His time was spent in the prison for the most part in study, or in receiving visits; but sometimes he descended to lower amusements, and diverted himself in the kitchen with the conversation of the criminals; for it was not pleasing to him to be much without company, and though he was very capable of a judicious choice, he was often contented with the first that offered: for this he was sometimes reproved by his friends, who found him surrounded with felons; but the reproof was on that, as on other occasions, thrown away; he continued to gratify himself, and to set very little value on the opinion of others.

But here, as in every other scene of his life, he made use of such opportunities as occurred of benefiting those who were more miserable than himself, and was always ready to perform any offices of humanity to his fellow-prisoners.

He

He had now ceased from corresponding with any of his subscribers except one, who yet continued to remit him the twenty pounds a year which he had promised him, and by whom it was expected, that he would have been in a very short time enlarged, because he had directed the keeper to enquire after the state of his debts.

However, he took care to enter his name according to the forms of the court, that the creditor might be obliged to make him some allowance, if he was continued a prisoner, and when on that occasion he appeared in the hall was treated with very unusual respect.

But the resentment of the city was afterwards raised by some accounts that had been spread of the satire, and he was informed that some of the merchants intended to pay the allowance which the law required, and to detain him a prisoner at their own expence. This he treated as an empty menace, and perhaps might have hastened the publication, only to shew how much he was superior to their insults, had not all his schemes been suddenly destroyed.

When he had been six months in prison, he received from one of his friends *, in whose kindness he had the greatest confidence, and on whose assistance he chiefly depended, a letter, that contained a charge of very atrocious ingratitude, drawn up in such terms as sudden resentment dictated. Mr. Savage returned a very solemn protestation of his innocence, but however appeared much disturbed at the accusation. Some days afterwards he was seized with a pain in his back and side, which, as it was not violent, was not suspected to be dangerous; but growing daily more languid and dejected, on the 25th of July he confined himself to his room, and a fever seized his spirits.

* Mr. Pope.

The symptoms grew every day more formidable, but his condition did not enable him to procure any assistance. The last time that the keeper saw him was on July the 31st *, when Savage, seeing him at his bedside, said, with an uncommon earnestness, ' I have something to say to you, Sir ;' but, after a pause, moved his hand in a melancholy manner, and finding himself unable to recollect what he was going to communicate, said, ' 'Tis gone !' The keeper soon after left him, and the next morning he died. He was buried in the church-yard of St. Peter, at the expence of the keeper.

Such were the life and death of Richard Savage, a man equally distinguished by his virtues and vices, and at once remarkable for his weaknesses and abilities.

He was of a middle stature, of a thin habit of body, a long visage, coarse features, and melancholy aspect ; of a grave and manly deportment, a solemn dignity of mien ; but which, upon a nearer acquaintance, softened into an engaging easiness of manners. His walk was slow, and his voice tremulous and mournful. He was easily excited to smiles, but very seldom provoked to laughter.

His mind was in an uncommon degree vigorous and active. His judgment was accurate, his apprehension quick, and his memory so tenacious, that he was frequently observed to know what he had learned from others in a short time, better than those by whom he was informed, and could frequently recollect incidents, with all their combination of circumstances, which few would have regarded at the present time, but which the quickness of his apprehension impressed upon him. He had the peculiar felicity, that his attention never deserted him ; he

* In 1743.

was present to every object, and regardful of the most trifling occurrences. He had the art of escaping from his own reflections, and accommodating himself to every new scene.

To this quality is to be imputed the extent of his knowledge, compared with the small time which he spent in visible endeavours to acquire it. He mingled in cursory conversation with the same steadiness of attention as others apply to a lecture, and, amidst the appearance of thoughtless gaiety, lost no new idea that was started, nor any hint that could be improved. He had therefore made in coffee-houses the same proficiency as in other studies; and it is remarkable, that the writings of a man of little education and little reading have an air of learning scarcely to be found in any other performances, but which perhaps as often obscures as embellishes them.

His judgment was eminently exact both with regard to writings and to men. The knowledge of life was indeed his chief attainment, and it is not without some satisfaction, that I can produce the suffrage of Savage in favour of human nature, of which he never appeared to entertain such odious ideas, as some, who perhaps had neither his judgment nor experience, have published, either in ostentation of their sagacity, vindication of their crimes, or gratification of their malice.

His method of life particularly qualified him for conversation, of which he knew how to practise all the graces. He was never vehement or loud, but at once modest and easy, open and respectful; his language was vivacious and elegant, and equally happy upon grave or humorous subjects. He was generally censured for not knowing when to retire, but that was not the defect of his judgment, but of his fortune; when he left his company, he was frequently to spend
the

the remaining part of the night in the street, or at least was abandoned to gloomy reflections, which it is not strange that he delayed as long as he could, and sometimes forgot that he gave others pain to avoid it himself.

It cannot be said, that he made use of his abilities for the direction of his own conduct: an irregular and dissipated manner of life had made him the slave of every passion that happened to be excited by the presence of its object, and that slavery to his passions reciprocally produced a life irregular and dissipated. He was not master of his own motions, nor could promise any thing for the next day.

With regard to his economy, nothing can be added to the relation of his life: He appeared to think himself born to be supported by others, and dispensed from all necessity of providing for himself; he therefore never prosecuted any scheme of advantage, nor endeavoured even to secure the profits which his writings might have afforded him.

His temper was, in consequence of the dominion of his passions, uncertain and capricious; he was easily engaged, and easily disgusted; but he is accused of retaining his hatred more tenaciously than his benevolence.

He was compassionate both by nature and principle, and always ready to perform offices of humanity; but when he was provoked, and very small offences were sufficient to provoke him, he would prosecute his revenge with the utmost acrimony till his passion had subsided.

His friendship was therefore of little value; for though he was zealous in the support or vindication of those whom he loved, yet it was always dangerous to trust him, because he considered himself as discharged by the first quarrel from all ties of honour or

gratitude ; and would betray those secrets, which, in the warmth of confidence, had been imparted to him. This practice drew upon him an universal accusation of ingratitude ; nor can it be denied that he was very ready to set himself free from the load of an obligation ; for he could not bear to conceive himself in a state of dependance, his pride being equally powerful with his other passions, and appearing in the form of insolence at one time, and of vanity at another. Vanity, the most innocent species of pride, was most frequently predominant : He could not easily leave off, when he had once began to mention himself, or his works ; nor ever read his verses, without stealing his eyes from the page, to discover, in the faces of his audience, how they were affected with any favourite passage.

A kinder name than that of vanity ought to be given to the delicacy with which he was always careful to separate his own merit from every other man's, and to reject that praise to which he had no claim. He did not forget, in mentioning his performances, to mark every line that had been suggested or amended, and was so accurate, as to relate that he owed three words in *THE WANDERER* to the advice of his friends.

His veracity was questioned, but with little reason ; his accounts, though not indeed always the same, were generally consistent. When he loved any man he suppressed all his faults ; and when he had been offended by him, concealed all his virtues : But his characters were generally true, so far as he proceeded ; though it cannot be denied, that his partiality might have sometimes the effect of falsehood.

In cases indifferent he was zealous for virtue, truth, and justice : he knew very well the necessity of goodness

ness to the present and future happiness of mankind; nor is there perhaps any writer, who has less endeavoured to please by flattering the appetites, or perverting the judgment.

As an author, therefore, and he now ceases to influence mankind in any other character, if one piece which he had resolved to suppress be excepted, he has very little to fear from the strictest moral or religious censure. And though he may not be altogether secure against the objections of the critic, it must however be acknowledged, that his works are the productions of a genius truly poetical; and, what many writers who have been more lavishly applauded cannot boast, that they have an original air, which has no resemblance of any foregoing writer; that the versification and sentiments have a cast peculiar to themselves, which no man can imitate with success, because what was nature in Savage, would in another be affectation. It must be confessed that his descriptions are striking, his images animated, his fictions justly imagined, and his allegories artfully pursued; that his diction is elevated, though sometimes forced, and his numbers sonorous and majestic, though frequently sluggish and encumbered. Of his style the general fault is harshness, and its general excellence is dignity; of his sentiments the prevailing beauty is sublimity, and uniformity the prevailing defect.

For his life, or for his writings, none, who candidly consider his fortune, will think an apology either necessary or difficult. If he was not always sufficiently instructed in his subject, his knowledge was at least greater than could have been attained by others in the same state. If his works were sometimes unfinished, accuracy cannot reasonably be exacted from a man oppressed with want, which he
has

cxvi LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

has no hope of relieving, but by a speedy publication. The insolence and resentment of, which he is accused, were not easily to be avoided by a great mind, irritated by perpetual hardships, and constrained hourly to return the spurns of contempt, and repress the insolence of prosperity; and vanity may surely readily be pardoned in him, to whom life afforded no other comforts than barren praises, and the consciousness of deserving them.

Those are no proper judges of his conduct, who have slumbered away their time on the down of affluence; nor will any wise man presume to say, 'Had I been in Savage's condition, I should have lived or written better than Savage.'

This relation will not be wholly without its use, if those, who languish under any part of his sufferings, shall be enabled to fortify their patience, by reflecting that they feel only those afflictions from which the abilities of Savage did not exempt him; or those, who, in confidence of superior capacities or attainments, disregard the common maxims of life, shall be reminded that nothing will supply the want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity, long continued, will make knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.

END OF THE LIFE OF MR. SAVAGE.



LOVE

LOVE IN A VEIL.

A

C O M E D Y.

ACTED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL IN
DRURY-LANE,

IN THE YEAR 1719,

BY HIS MAJESTY'S SERVANTS.

Love, studious how to please, improves our parts,
With polish'd manners, and adorns with arts.

DRYDEN.



TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
G E O R G E,
L O R D L A N D S D O W N.

MY LORD,

AN address from a stranger, and one that asks favours too, ought to have more recommendation than I am afraid you will find in this. It is my misfortune to stand in such a relation to the late Earl RIVERS, by the Countess of ———, as neither of us can be proud of owning; but that is the smallest part of my unhappiness, since I am one of those sons of sorrow, to whom he left nothing to alleviate the sin of my birth. Under this scene of affliction I have had leisure enough to divert my hours of melancholy with writing this

COMEDY, for which I humbly beg Your Lordship's patronage. My play, and myself, my Lord, are equally orphans, and in that view only I desire Your Lordship would look upon

Your most obedient

Humble servant,

RICHARD SAVAGE.

P R O L O G U E

SPOKEN BY MR. THURMOND.

THE youthful author of our scenes to-day,
Who scarce writes man, has boldly writ a play!
But now we fear new plays no more can thrive
Than summer-fruits in winter frosts survive.
Poetic laurels then triumphant show,
And shall their branches now less chearful grow?
Shall those kind genial heats that bless the year,
Come to create a barren season here?
Or, shall that tree, fame's wreath by PHOEBUS made,
Now parch! and at his sultry influence fade?

Our poet, who to-night attempts at praise,
From various turns, wou'd your diversion raise.
To please gay fancies, he at humour strove,
At plot for critics, for the ladies love.
Yet life's low scenes he owns may here seem scarce,
But well-wrought business makes amends for farce.
Not but our scene drawn on a foreign coast
Of home-bred fools might some resemblance boast;
For tho' each clime t'improve the muses toil,
Yet fools, like weeds, shoot up in ev'ry soil.

Our lively images are too sublime!
We draw our glory from the British clime.
In our wild hero's character we tell,
What love, what honour in the English dwell.
Not one of nature's monsters here we show,
Yet thro' our scenes some seeds of satire strow.
Be gen'rous then! and let our author's care,
Appease the critics, and divert the fair.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Lorenzo, governor of Valencia, father to Leonora,	} Mr. Williams
Alonzo, father to Fidelia,	Mr. Norris.
Sir Charles Winlove, an English gentleman, fled from Madrid for the death of his rival,	} Mr. Mills.
Don Philip, a noble Spaniard, contracted to Leonora,	} Mr. Thurmond.
Aspin, servant to Sir. Cha. Winlove,	Mr. Miller.
Diego, servant to Alonzo,	Mr. Will. Mills.

W O M E N.

Leonora, daughter to the governor,	Mrs. Seymour.
Fidelia, a young lady fled after Sir Cha. Winlove to Valencia,	} Miss Willis
Flora, servant to Leonora,	Mrs. Garnet.
Alguzil, officers, keeper, and attendants.	

SCENE VALENCIA.

LOVE IN A VEIL.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The Street.

Enter Sir Charles Winlove and Don Philip meeting.

Sir Cha. **D**ON Philip!

D. Phil. Sir Charles Winlove! What miracle has brought you here?

Sir Cha. Why faith, 'tis a miracle owing to fortune—Have you heard what has happened to me at Madrid?

D. Phil. I heard of your unfortunate adventure there, before I left it—How long have you been come to Valencia?

Sir Cha. About a fortnight; and I only wait for a fair wind to carry me to England.

D. Phil. I'd advise you to make the best of your way, for there was a rumour that orders wou'd be sent to the sea-ports to put a stop to your passage.

Sir Cha. Why this comes now of intriguing in Spain—A man can't carry on an amour, but he must cut the throat of some jealous coxcomb or other to cure him of his impertinence—But what other news? I find you left Madrid later than I did—Is my rival, that I wounded, dead?

8 LOVE IN A VEIL.

D. Phil. When I came away I heard that his life was despair'd of.—And that the lady for whom your quarrel began, was fled from her father's house.

Sir Cha. I am sorry, for her sake, for she is every way so agreeable, that cou'd I learn to be constant, 'twould be only to her—But I find one love is still an antidote to expel another: For I have seen such a beauty here in Valencia!—

D. Phil. Another beauty! Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. Ay, one so charming, so good-humour'd, and so witty, she's enough to turn the resolutions of a Cynic—

D. Phil. Is she a woman of quality?

Sir Cha. Faith, I can't tell—Her appearance is as yet like that of Cynthia in a cloud, for I have never seen her but in a VEIL.

D. Phil. I thought to have heard that you'd have been more cautious, Sir Charles—But I find you are still the same, and are resolv'd to bear the frowns of fortune with as much pleasure as her smiles—

Sir Cha. Ay, Don Philip, let cowards fear her; and fools, her daily favourites, adore her—For my part, love and friendship shall still be the darlings of my soul—And new pleasures the continual business of my life—But prithee, what sort of company have you here in Valencia?—For tho' I am return-
ing

ing to England, I am so tir'd with politics, that I perfectly nauseate the conversation of it.

D. Phil. How so? Is there no other to be had then?—

Sir Cha. None! Politicians start out of every profession, and stock-jobbers lies are the only discourse one can meet with.

D. Phil. I hope the beaux don't turn politicians in any nation—

Sir Cha. The beaux! Why the very women are turn'd politicians—In short, the gossiping of the tea-table is as much infected as the society of the coffee-houses—How are you at this part of the globe?

D. Phil. We are like the rest of the world.—Here are all manner of characters—Husbands that are jealous of their honour, and wives that as craftily betray it—For the ladies—Here's a composition of all nations—Some boast the affectation of the French; some their own natural Spanish pride; and others the beauty and obstinacy of your English women—Then for the men, here are from the formal grantees to the extravagant fop; and from the cavaliers of quality to the very fortune-hunter—In short, here are all degrees whatsoever—Some of 'em rely upon the merit of their riches, and others upon that of their assurance—

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. Assurance is the most thriving virtue of the age. 'Tis a fortune for a courtier, and a prevailing eloquence in a lover—But amongst the rest, What sort of a man is your governor?

D. Phil. A man of quality, and one whose innate worth is an honour to the office he bears—Now I think on't, he may be of service to you.

Sir Cha. Ay; prithee which way?

D. Phil. He has a daughter.

Sir Cha. Is she very handsome;

D. Phil. Beautiful as an angel; and then for her wit, 'tis as enchanting as her beauty; her repartees are as quick as her eyes, and—

Sir Cha. And when shall I see her, Don Philip?

D. Phil. She's to be my wife—For which purpose I am come here to Valencia.—

Sir Cha. How could'st thou be so ill-natur'd now, to raise my fancy to such a pitch for this? What service can it be to me?

D. Phil. I did not design to help you to a mistress, Sir Charles, I only had a mind to let you know my interest with the governor; and I hope to win him to intercede for your pardon, and to wink at your security here.—

Sir Cha. Oh! you are ever obliging, Don Philip.

D. Phil. This is a trifle amongst friends.—I remember

member in England, when I was oppress'd by odds, you sav'd my life with hazard of your own— Here I run no risque in the preservation of yours— But how d'ye intend to spend the day ?

Sir Cha. I have an assignation, but the time is not yet expir'd.

D. Phil. In the mean time what say you to a glass of good wine ?

Sir Cha. With all my heart—For 'tis still my opinion, that next to the chat of a lady at her tea-table, there's no pleasure like the society of a friend over a bottle.—

D. Phil. Oh you are ever pleasant, Sir Charles.— But ha ! Who comes here ?

Sir Cha. 'Tis my servant ?—Don Philip, you'll excuse me a little, I'll be with you immediately.

D. Phil. I see you are upon the scent of an intrigue ! Well, I won't interrupt you—when you have done with your emissary, follow me to the next inn, where I'll wait for you.

Sir Cha. Do so ; I'll talk but a minute with my man, and then I am your's over a bottle.

[*Exit Don Philip.*

Enter Aspin.

So, Aspin, What news have you brought me of the lady in the VEIL ?

Asp.

Asp. News! Sir; if I had accomplish'd my ends, I cou'd have brought you news and success enough to make your heart leap up to your mouth.

Sir Cha. Look ye, Sirrah, don't trifle, my time's too precious, by repeating what you only fancy you cou'd have done; but tell me what success you have had in reality.—Did you dog the lady as I order'd you?

Asp. Dog the lady! Ay, Sir, I have dog'd her to some purpose! Well, I'll say no more; but if expedition and conduct can make a statesman, Aspin may in time come to be distinguish'd by a title.

Sir Cha. Nay, I can scarce doubt of your success, for I know thou art an excellent setter upon occasion.

Asp. Ay, and a runner too, as you'll find by the sequel of the story—Look ye, Sir, you may remember you order'd me to watch the lady home; I obey'd your commands, but she perceiving my employment, led me through the mazes of several blind alleys; notwithstanding which, like an experienc'd instrument of the game, I still kept as close a scent after her, as hound after a coney.

Sir Cha. A very pretty similitude!—But have you hous'd her? Tell me that part of the story, Aspin!

Asp. Hous'd her! No, Sir, I han't hous'd her!

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. No, Sirrah ! Then what's the end of all this mighty performance ?

Asp. Nothing at all, Sir !—In short there fell out an unlucky accident ; for as I was hot in the pursuit, I happen'd to stumble upon a pebble, sprain'd my ancle, and lost the fight of her in a moment.

Sir Cha. Now, Sirrah, wou'd I cane you for the disappointment, but that I have other affairs in hand.—Mark me, I am now going to drink a bottle with a friend, in an hour I am to meet the lady at my lodging ; and if you don't look better to your post, I'll break that rascally head of yours, Sirrah.

[*Exit.*

Asp. Ay, to be sure ! What damnable lives do we poor valets lead ! if we succeed in the most difficult adventure, we do but our duty forsooth ; but if we fail, I'll break your head you rascal ; hold, let me think how shall I retrieve my misfortunes. [*Studies.*

Enter Diego.

Dieg. Hift ! Friend, do you live hereabouts ?

Asp. Hum ! ha ! Why, what is that to you, friend, where I live ? I owe you nothing.

Dieg. But I owe you a great deal.

Asp. Say you so, Sir ! Come, pay then, pay ;—egad
this

this fellow has mistaken me for somebody else ; now if I should luckily come in for a round sum that I have no pretence to, faith 'twould be very welcome—But as you was saying, Sir ! what do you owe me ?

Dieg. A great deal of respect, Sir, as you are a fine gentleman, and all that, Sir—

Asp. Phough, pox, d'ye mean to banter me ? If that's all, I won't give a pin for your debt, Sir.

Dieg. Oh ! But, Sir ! you don't comprehend me ; my respect is but the prelude to something greater.

Asp. Ha ! To something greater ! Egad this fellow has the air of what we call in downright English a pimp. Odso ! Aspin, thou art a made man !

Dieg. The fellow seems tickled with some imagination that may be of use to me, I'll study to improve it [*Aside*]. But as I was saying, Sir, may not I be so happy to know your lodging—Come, don't stand in your own light, I'll engage you shall be handsomely rewarded by one greater than myself.

Asp. Egad it is so—Some Seignora has fix'd her affections upon me ; what is she, Sir ; what is she ?—Harkee, which part of me has tickled her ladyship's fancy ? ha !

Dieg. As I guess'd ; I'll humour him—I am under an obligation not to—

Asp. Not to—What ? Come, come, hang secrecy !

Is

Is it the broadness of my shoulders, the bigness of my calves, or the air of my gait,—that has done it? Ha? Odsso, now I think on't, I warrant the jade has heard I am an Irishman—Ay, there it is faith now.

Dieg. Ay, ay, you have hit it! Therefore, if you'll let me see where you lodge, I'll bring a chair for you in the evening, and convey you to the arms of the most beautiful Madona in all Valencia.

Asp. Ay! But upon second thoughts! I find I am very unfit for such an adventure.

Dieg. What do you mean?

Asp. Mean! Why I mean that I ever had from my cradle a damnable aversion to a pistol, or a poniard—Nay, now I think on't, last night I had an ugly dream about the noise of a pistol—But hang dreams, they shall never fright a man of my courage.—Know then, Sir, I live at yonder green rails: I am but a valet, or so, Sir, but in an hour I shall be at my lady's command—In the mean time I'll follow the example of my master, and drink a bottle to prepare myself for her service. [*Exit.*]

Dieg. This fool has betray'd his master as I cou'd wish—But now for my lord governor. [*Exit.*]

SCENE,

SCENE, *The governor's house.*

Enter Lorenzo with a letter, and Diego.

Lor. Bring you this from Madrid, say you?—But hold, let me peruse it.

“ An English cavalier, who has lately kill'd
 “ a nobleman of Spain, is fled away with my
 “ daughter; and, as I am inform'd, they
 “ have taken their way to Valencia—I desire
 “ you will lose no time in endeavouring to
 “ seize 'em—The bearer will give you a full
 “ description of both. I am yours,

“ From Madrid.

“ ALONZO.”

I take it kindly that my friend remembers me in this misfortune—for I owe him many obligations—Who is this cavalier?

Dieg. He is call'd Sir Charles Winlove; and he undoubtedly stole her, for she was the cause of their duel.

Lor. Where do you think he is?

Dieg. My lord, I had just now notice of his lodging from his own servant, and if you please I'll prepare officers in order to seize him.

Lor. Do so, and I'll go in person! [*Exit Diego.*
 Unfor-

Unfortunate Alonzo ! how unhappy is the man, the honour of whose family depends on a woman.

Enter Leonora and Flora.

Leo. What makes you so thoughtful, Sir.

Lor. If you knew the contents of this paper, Leonora, you wou'd not wonder that the cares of a father shou'd make me thoughtful.

Leo. Why so, my lord ? I hope I have not been guilty of any thing to displease you.

Lor. Not as yet—But the duty of a parent is a great weight ; and where the loss of honour depends, 'tis to be fear'd more than the loss of life—I am in haste at present, and must defer this subject till another opportunity—In the mean time take heed, my Leonora. *[Exit.*

Leo. I am confus'd !—What does my father mean by the loss of honour ?

Flo. I am afraid, Madam, that he knows some of your haunts, and therefore I'd advise you to be cautious.

Leo. 'Tis hard that a Spanish woman can't have an amour, but some jealous-pated father or brother must interfere with the honour of his family. Now I have heard, that the English women may take what diversion they please, and be rather celebrated

for their beauty, than censur'd.—Nay, that the very wives may have a whole equipage of lovers, and be the more admired by their husbands.

Flo. 'Tis the nature of the climate, Madam ; as in France the coquet is rather admir'd for her airs, than censur'd for her inclinations. Not but there's detraction in both climates ; but there 'tis a pleasure peculiar to the women, where scandal passes for wit, and one beauty rises on the falling reputation of another. The men, unless the beaux, have nothing to do with it ; and those no farther, than a little raillery for their diversion.

Leo. I cou'd be as free as they had I the power— For I have chose a person of my own liking, and my father has contracted me to one that is indifferent to me. Now, methinks, there's such a pleasure in the disobedience, that it adds an eloquence to the suit of a lover.

Flo. But, Madam, d'ye consider that the nature of this country is revenge—Here is none of the careless brother, the indulgent father, nor the meek animal, a husband.

Leo. 'Tis want of courage in our lovers to put a good custom in practice, otherwise the jealous fury of a Spanish Don might in time be moderated to the content of a London citizen.

Flo.

Flo. But, Madam, you have not so much reason to complain—Is not Don Philip, your intended husband, a noble Spaniard, and as agreeable as the English cavalier?

Leo. Oh what a hideous comparison have you made! the English cavalier! Is he not all that a woman can wish for? A man of gallantry—Beautiful in his person, and agreeable in his conversation? Are not all the persuasive charms of wit upon his tongue? Is he not, in short, an Englishman?

Flo. Is not Don Philip a man of honour? of a gallant disposition—And then he loves you as well as the other.

Leo. Ay, but then he is to be my husband, Flora; and the prospect of a forc'd marriage eclipses the worth of a suitor—Besides, my mother was an Englishwoman—Therefore I am of so gay a temper, and so naturally fond of liberty, that I can never be confin'd to the humours of a jealous Spaniard.

Flo. I am convinc'd, Madam, by your inclinations to the English cavalier, that beauty is totally owing to fancy—But how came you acquainted with him at first?

Leo. I'll tell you—You know when my father sent for me to Valencia, the people after my arrival crowded to see me—I was admir'd by the men, and

envy'd by the women—When I appear'd at church, all were in a consternation—whispering, This is the governor's daughter—till, contrary to my sex, I was almost tir'd with vanity itself—One day I went VEIL'D into the walks to divert myself—There I thought I saw my father, but afterwards it prov'd otherwise—Then I flew into a summer-house to avoid him—where I met this stranger, who, seeing me in distress, proffer'd his assistance—I was pleas'd with the compliment, and lik'd both his conversation and his person—He press'd to know me; but I refus'd it—However, I have often seen him since, and must in short, according to appointment, meet him instantly again.—

Flo. But, Madam, your father has agreed for your marriage, and this apartment has received your intended husband.

Enter Servant.

Serv. A lady desires to see you, Madam,

Leo. Who is she?

Serv. I never saw her before.

Leo. Desire her to walk in.

Enter Fidelia VEIL'D.

Fide. Madam, I am come, tho' unknown, an humble petitioner to you.

Leo.

Leo. If 'tis a secret, I'll hear it alone, Madam.

Fide. No, 'tis what a servant must know, if granted.

Leo. In what can I serve you.

Fide. In giving refuge to an unfortunate person—But ere I tell you my story, be pleas'd to peruse that letter.

Leo. Madam, you are welcome upon the recommendation of Theodosia—I hope she's well.

Fide. I thank you, Madam, she's very well.

Leo. You shall be us'd with as much respect as myself—She has here inform'd me, you're unfortunate ; but the particulars I am ignorant of.

Fide. That task is left for me—which I shall tell you in a few words—I am the daughter of a nobleman, whose name, in respect to him, I conceal—I lov'd, unknown to him, an English cavalier—for whom, as I was waiting one night at the garden-gate, another whom I slighted rush'd in with him.

Leo. I fear the consequence was fatal, Madam.

Fide. It was indeed!—He, whom I had the least affection for, exasperated by jealousy and revenge, immediately drew—They fought : he fell ! Whereupon the English gentleman presently took horse, and rode away.

Leo. What course cou'd you take in this extremity of fortune?

Fide. Alas! Madam, I was so frighten'd, I knew not what I did—I shriek'd and cry'd for help when it was too late—Thereupon a tumult arose—My father call'd for me! Instead of answering him, I fled from his anger, and Theodosia conceal'd me till I came here—The unhappy gentleman that was vanquish'd, liv'd to tell who kill'd him, and the cause; and by this time I believe is expir'd.

Leo. I am sorry for your misfortunes, and will endeavour to moderate 'em.—I know, myself, what 'tis to love against a father's will.—Therefore depend on my assistance.

Fide. Madam, I thank you; that's all that's in my power.

Leo. No more ceremonies—You are Theodosia's representative of friendship, and as such I esteem you—Flora, shew the lady in, and order Clara to attend her—I wou'd not have my father see you, till he has given leave to receive you.

[*Exeunt Fidelia and Flora.*]

Leo. Methinks I am touch'd for her misfortunes, as if my own—Besides, who knows what the consequences of my love may prove?

Enter

Enter Flora.

Leo. My VEIL, Flora ; I'll meet this cavalier instantly.

Flo. Madam, beware of a discovery by so often venturing.

Leo. Too much caution is no good conduct in an amour ; for lovers have a thousand artifices in the worst of dangers.

In love and war we must no fears betray,
Valour's the conduct that must win the day.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A garden.

Enter Sir Charles, and Aspin.

Sir Cha. **T** WAS excellent wine ; and methinks my mistress's health has so elevated my fancy, that it has inspir'd me for the assignation—Let me see, 'tis just upon the time of the appointment—Where have you been, firrah ?

Asp. Drinking the lady's health, Sir.

Sir Cha. You are a pretty fellow to toast that indeed,

B 4

Asp.

Asp. Sir, I guess'd you were at the same sport, and that made me follow the example.

Sir Cba. Sirrah, the airs of my conversation as ill become one of your character, as those of my dress; but, like the vulgar in a factious country, you love to ape the actions of your superiors.

Asp. Sir, a valet claims as great a title to his master's second-hand wit, as to his cast-off cloaths; and custom has equally made 'em the due perquisites of his place.

Sir Cba. Retire quickly—The lady's coming.

[*Exit Asp.*]

Enter Leonora and Flora.

Thus Sol, when he his amber beauty shrouds,
Revives the flowers, tho' wrapt, like you, in clouds.
In beams that stray, some cheerful influence steals,
Till the kind God at length his rays reveals.

Leo. That's more than I may chance to do, if you are so complaisant as to mean me by the comparison.

Sir Cba. That you may chance to do! I am very glad, Madam, that you are so dubious as to leave it to chance. 'Tis possible you may chance to be cruel, but I hope that the probability is to the contrary.

Leo. The probability depends indeed upon your hope.

hope—And lovers hopes are at best but shadows of thought, that produce no reality.

Sir Cha. Madam, you are pleas'd to be witty, and I admire you for it—But the sight of you wou'd make me your perfect adorer.

Leo. D'ye think there's no true love without seeing the object.

Sir Cha. No, certainly.

Leo. How d'ye think a blind man can be sensible of the passion, if he did not depend on his imagination. Now, perhaps, were you to see me, you'd no longer admire me; therefore I think you had best remain as you are.

Sir Cha. Hold; I forbid that, Madam—A blind man can never hope to see the object of his affections, and therefore can never expect to satisfy his curiosity—But sight was given me to make use of—And shou'd I be so contented, I shou'd suffer you to blind my reason, as well as my eyes.

Leo. Can you be a lover, and pretend to the use of reason—That's a contradiction in itself.

Sir Cha. Not in the least—'Tis a ranging unsettled passion that's a contradiction to good sense—But love and reason are inseparable, like wit and judgment—For as one is fond of the beauty, the other distinguishes the value of the blessing, and therefore knows how to prize it.

Leo.

Leo. Notwithstanding your rhetoric, they are an objection to each other—For according to the dictates of love, I ought to grant your desires, and let you see me—But shou'd I now follow the maxims of reason, I shou'd remain in a cloud as I am—and here break off our correspondence.

Sir Cha. That I deny—For as love has prompted you thus far, reason will shew you 'tis too late now to retire; therefore you see that every argument you raise is an objection to your cruelty—Besides, when we parted last, you promised I should see you—And I hope you will be as good as your word now.

Leo. But you know the promises of ladies, lovers, and courtiers are seldom of any effect—However, I won't stand with you for a trifle—How d'ye like me? [Unveils.

Sir Cha. I am considering with myself, whether you are an angel, or a woman—I thought so much wit cou'd not be obscur'd in a common form—And now I stand convinc'd in admiration. [Noise.
Hey! What's the matter now?

Enter Aspin in a fright.

Asp. Fly, Sir, fly immediately for your life.

Sir Cha. Fly! prithee for what reason?

Asp. We shall only be hang'd, Sir, that's all, if we

we stay—But I'll secure the garden-door to favour our retreat, if there's any to be made.

[Shuts the garden-door.]

Leo. What's the matter, fellow? are you mad?

A/p. Mad! No, 'tis my master is mad to stay here—Leap over the wall—Fly any way, Sir, for here's the governor with a whole troop of Jacks-in-office at his heels come to seize you.

Leo. Alas, my father, Flora! undoubtedly he's come thus on my account.

Sir Cha. Sure no man is so unfortunate!—Can love never come, but attended with crosses and disappointments?

A/p. Dear Sir, don't talk of love now—Confider, we are in danger of a halter.

Lor. Force open the doors there. *[Within.]*

A/p. Sir, what d'ye mean? Love is always the forerunner of mischief—A pox on it, our misfortune came from love before.

Leo. Sir, I am ruin'd if the governor sees me.

Sir Cha. Fair lady, I must leave you, my life depends on it.

Leo. And my honour—Hold; Can you be so barbarous to leave me here?

A/p. Can you be so barbarous to make us stay here, if you go to that.

[Noise.]

Sir,

Sir, make haste, or we shall be too late.

Leo. Stay! I am greater than you think—'Tis for me they come—And can you leave a woman in distress? think you my honour's nothing?

Asp. Nothing at all to compare with our lives—

[*Noise again.*

Sir, Are you mad? don't you hear?

Sir Cha. 'Twas ungenerous in me to leave Fidelia in danger—They shan't say I always serve a woman so—Madam, my life shall answer for your defence—Go into that arbour, whilst I guard the door.

[*Exit Leonora. She drops her glove.*

Asp. Nay, since you are resolv'd to be taken, Sir, I'll not keep you company. [*Goes to climb the wall.*

Sir Cha. Come down you pigeon-hearted rascal, and learn to stand to a noble defence.

Asp. Sir, conduct is more requir'd than courage—Therefore to run away will be the noblest defence, because 'tis the wisest. [*Noise again.*

Sir Cha. So! now they come! the door is falling from its hinges.

Enter Lorenzo, Alguazil, and officers.

Lor. Are not you, Sir Charles Winlove, an English cavalier?

Sir

Sir Cha. I scorn to deny my name.

Lor. Seize him! now to prison with him.

Sir Cha. Sir, consider, I'm no common person.

Lor. I know you are a man of quality, and as such I shall use you. Restore the gentleman his sword—Where's the lady?

Sir Cha. The lady, say you?

Lor. Ay, the lady, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. A lady with me! What d'ye mean, my lord?

Lor. You need not deny it, I come well inform'd.
—Search about there.

Sir Cha. What woman can it be that has brought me into this misfortune? [*Officers find Aspin.*]

Lor. What fellow's that.

Sir Cha. A servant of mine, my lord.

Lor. Secure him.

Asp. Now, Sir, had not leaping over the wall, and making to sea, been a much better journey than a ride to the gallows?—We had better have run the risque of being pickled in salt water, than of hanging like a couple of signs between earth and air; you for a warning to all resolute lovers, and I to such servants as follow their masters desperate fortunes.

Lor. What glove's that?

Alg. 'Tis a lady's.

Lor.

Lor. Then 'tis probable she can't be far off—
Search that arbour. [*They bring in Leonora veiled.*]

Leo. I am half dead with confusion—'Tis my
father! what can I expect? [*Aside.*]

Alg. In a corner of the arbour we found this lady
—Unveil to my lord governor.

Lor. Madam, you need not, for I know you
well.

Leo. What does he say? Was ever woman so
unfortunate! [*Aside.*]

Lor. I am sensible what courtesy I owe you—
Pardon the nature of my coming for you.

Sir Cha. And pardon me that she does not go
with you—For single as I am, and thus oppress'd
by odds, I had rather die, than she shou'd be a
sufferer.

Leo. Generous cavalier! [*Aside.*]

Lor. Is this the honourable use you make of the
restoration of your sword?—But you shall find we
can quell you, Sir.

Sir Cha. I tell you, my lord, I know to oppose you
is to die; and that I can, with pleasure, in vindication
of distress'd innocence.

Lor. Don't think to deceive me! I know you
both—Her father's so much my friend, I am equally
concern'd with him for her.

Leo.

Leo. These words confirm my fears! what shall I think or say? [*Aside.*]

Sir Cha. Use her well, my lord, that's all I ask.

Lor. My honour on her usage.

Asp. Nay, if our general comes to a parley, a surrender follows of course—Sir, my courage is rais'd at last, and so let us e'en fight it out with 'em now.

Sir Cha. My lord, I rely on your honour, and submit.

Leo. Then I am lost. [*Aside.*]

Lor. Keep your sword still—Here, take this gentleman to the castle—For the lady, she shall be in my house, and receiv'd there as my daughter.

Leo. As his daughter! I see now I am certainly discover'd. [*Aside.*]

Lor. Bring that fellow along—He shall go with his master—Hark you, a word with you. [*To Alg.*]

Asp. Now, when I am in the humour of fighting, 'tis very hard to be given up a prisoner, and have my valour nipt in the bud.

Sir Cha. Madam, don't be dejected—Our next meeting may be a turn of joy—And I hope this adventure in the end will but prove like a little discord in music, which raises it to a sweeter harmony.

Lor. Come, 'tis time for you to part—Mr. Alguazil,

guazil, dispose of the lady as I order'd you—Lead on there.

[*Excunt severally.*]

Enter Flora.

Flo. So! they are gone! I overheard all, and 'twas lucky they did not see me in the opposite corner to my lady—What woman wou'd trust an assignation, if this was always to be the consequence?—But I must run home the back-ways, and prepare the family for her reception.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *The governor's house.*

Enter Don Philip.

D. Phil. What! nobody to be found! Methinks the house looks as if the family had deserted it—Where can they all be gone?

Enter Flora.

Flo. So! thanks to my stars, I have got home before 'em—But I have run till I am quite out of breath.

[*Starts.*]

Don Philip!

D. Phil. Flora, where are all the family?

Flo. My lady is gone abroad.

D. Phil. Where's my lord governor?

Flo.

Flo. He has just now sent an English cavalier prisoner to the castle.

D. Phil. Ha ! an English cavalier ! d'ye know who he is !

Flo. One Sir Charles Winlove, my lord !

D. Phil. Flora ! that cavalier is my dearest friend—But wherefore do I loiter !—I'll fly this moment to meet the governor, and try to intercede in his behalf. *[Exit.]*

Flo. There's one obstacle remov'd—But here they come.

Enter Alguazil, officers, and Leonora.

Alg. Where's the lady Leonora ? I have a message to her from the governor.

Leo. What does the fellow mean ? *[Aside.]*

Flo. There's certainly some mistake in this—I'll humour it. *[Aside.]* Perhaps it may prove a lucky turn. The lady Leonora's friend is abroad, and therefore you may leave your message.

Alg. My lord governor has sent this person a prisoner—But orders that your lady will take care to have her us'd respectfully—So here my commission ends, and I leave her to your charge. *[Exeunt.]*

Leo. Are they gone ?

Flo. Yes.

Leo. I was never so frighten'd in my life—What excuse shall I make to my father? Certainly, he knew me by what he said—And his caution to me this morning confirms it.

Flo. I rather believe, Madam, he mistook you for another; and, by all circumstances, for the lady you receiv'd to-day.

Leo. Ha! I have a thought—She said she look'd for an English cavalier that has kill'd a man.

Flo. And, Madam, by the circumstance of flying from her father's house, my lord governor may think he has seiz'd 'em together.

Leo. If so, I have a rival.

Flo. If so, you'll come clear off, by turning it upon her; I'll take away your *VEIL*, that you mayn't seem as if you had been abroad.

[*Exit, and returns.*]

Leo. Thou'rt a perfect Machiavel, Flora—I cou'd no more part with thee, than I cou'd with my better genius.

Flo. A good servant is as great a jewel as a good husband, Madam—And if you play your cards to the best advantage, 'tis not in the power of fortune to pique you.

Leo. But shou'd I serve the lady so now I have receiv'd

receiv'd her, 'twill be a breach of friendship and hospitality.

Flo. Great statesmen always sacrifice their friendship to their interest—Besides, self-preservation is the first law of nature ; and if you neglect this opportunity, you are ruin'd for ever.

Leo. But still, methinks, I have some scruples of honour, Flora.

Flo. A lady's honour, Madam, consists in her reputation ; and if you persist, you'll sacrifice that to the censure of the world, and be oblig'd, like her you have receiv'd, to fly from your father's house.

Leo. Well, thou art an excellent casuist for the scruples of a tender conscience—But if we shou'd be mistaken in the lady, now.

Flo. Never fear, Madam—I heard my lord governor call the English cavalier by the title of Sir Charles Winlove—Therefore, for better satisfaction, ask her the name of her lover—Oh, here she comes opportunely to our purpose !

Leo. I'll sift her by degrees, that she mayn't suspect me.

Enter Fidelia.

Fide. Have you press'd my suit to the governor yet, Madam ?

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Leo.

Leo. I have not as yet had an opportunity ; but I expect him every minute to come home, and then you may depend on't I'll use all my interest to serve you.

Fide. I see, Madam, you answer the character I have had of you—for you differ from the ladies of fashion, who, instead of pitying our sex in misfortunes, are the first that reflect on 'em, and expose 'em.

Leo. None of our sex are so ungenerous, but such, who, being guilty themselves, wou'd endeavour to hide their own frailties, by censuring the conduct of others.

Fide. I esteem it as the greatest happiness, that I have met with such a comfortable refuge in the midst of my misfortunes.

Leo. I am always, Madam, apt rather to assist a lady in distress than to reflect on her—But shou'd the governor comply with my request, what farther courses do you design to take ?

Fide. I'll search out for the English cavalier, who, I am inform'd, is here in Valencia—Otherwise, if I should miss of him, I hear my friends are endeavouring to make my peace with my father ; and as he was ever fond of me, I hope his tenderness will overcome his passion, and that he'll again receive me as his child.

Leo.

Leo. I hope all will turn to your advantage, Madam—But, in the mean time, what's the gentleman's name whom you are in search of?—Perhaps I may learn where he is, if he's in Valencia?

Fide. His name is Sir Charles Winlove.

Leo. Sir Charles Winlove, say you! this increases my misfortunes—Have I foster'd a rival?

Flo. Keep your temper, Madam, and stick to what you propos'd; we'll find an after-plot to redeem all.

Fide. She changes colour! what can this mean?

[*Aside.*

Enter Lorenzo, and Diego behind.

Lor. Now you may return to Madrid, and inform Alonzo that his daughter's secur'd in my house, and Sir Charles Winlove in the castle.

Dieg. But, my lord, I han't seen her yet, and therefore can't affirm it.

Lor. I'll call her then.

Dieg. I shou'd rather be glad to see her, so that she might not see me.

Lor. Hold; there's my daughter.

Dieg. And with her my lady—for she on her left hand is Fidelia.

Lor. Now, can you return with confidence?

Dieg. I can, my lord; farewell.

[*Exit.*

Leo. My father approaches!

Fide. I'll retire, Madam, while you press my suit to him. [Going.]

Lor. What makes the lady shun me, Leonora?

Leo. Because she's a stranger, and that makes her a little reserv'd, my lord.

Lor. D'ye remember my advice this morning, daughter?

Leo. Now my fears! [Aside.]

Lor. Now, Leonora, you may see the effect of making private assignations unknown to a father—and of exposing a reputation, and the honour of a family—What d'ye think will be the consequence of this?

Leo. Of what, my lord!—I am discover'd. [Aside.]

Lor. Recollect the adventures of this morning, and then you may guess at my meaning.

Leo. I see my stratagems are in vain—My lord, too well I understand you—And therefore throw me at your feet.

Flo. She has discover'd all! what shall we do now?

[Aside.]

Lor. What do you mean! Are you at cross-purposes, child?

Leo. My lord, I beg you hear me, and perhaps I may give you satisfaction. [Kneels.]

Lor. Rise then; and if you intend to give me satisfaction,

satisfaction, let it be in a reasonable answer—What makes you in this confusion?

Leo. My lord!

Lor. Are you so touch'd with yonder lady's misfortunes, that you kneel in her behalf?

Leo. Ha, I am amaz'd! what an unexpected turn is here.

Fide. The governor fixes his eyes on me! [*Aside.*]

Lor. I am glad you are so good-natur'd, Leonora! for tho' that lady is a prisoner, she is the daughter of my dearest friend, and therefore I'd have her us'd with singular respect.

Leo. Am I in my senses! or do I dream!

Flo. Courage, Madam; all's well again. [*Apart.*]

Leo. I had like to have betray'd myself by my timorous folly.

Fide. The governor approaches—I hope she has succeeded.

Leo. Ha! here comes another turn of discovery.

[*Aside.*]

Lor. Madam, you are welcome to my house—I know your quality, and am sorry for this accident.

Fide. My lord, I thank you—You see me here a stranger in this place—therefore, to raise your pity to my misfortunes, give me leave to relate their particulars.

Leo. Ha! if she talks, she betrays all—And then we shall be entirely undone. [*Aside.*]

Lor. I know your story already, Madam—Our histories are full of such amorous adventures—but I question not, but your's will shortly have a happy end—In the mean time, this house shall rather be your sanctuary than confinement—Daughter, I recommend this lady to your conversation. [*Exit.*]

Leo. Excellently come off!

Fide. I find, Madam, by my success, that you have pleaded strongly in my behalf.

Leo. I even kneel'd to my father to serve you, and am glad it has lain in my power.

Fide. I thank you, Madam—I shall never forget such obligations—You'll excuse me for retiring, for I am impatient till I have writ an account of my success to Theodosia. [*Exit.*]

Leo. It goes according to our wish—My father supposes 'twas her he seiz'd with Sir Charles; and she knows nothing of her being a prisoner, but is pleas'd with her confinement.

Flo. The end must crown all, Madam—And if you can carry on the mistake—'twill be excellent indeed! But how d'ye intend to proceed?

Leo. Suppose I write to Sir Charles?

Flo. Consider, Madam, what you do.

Leo.

Leo. You are the first servant that ever was against a lover—You see we are come well off—In love, as in gaming, if we can make a shift to save ourselves, the hopes of winning is a temptation to play on.

Flo. But, Madam, a little luck is commonly a rock, that draws young gamesters in to their destruction.

Leo. A lucky cast is seldom won by a faint heart—Love is a lottery, and therefore—

As ventures only can our fortunes frame,
Those who will nothing stake no prize can claim.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Lorenzo and Don Philip meeting.

D. Phil. **M**Y lord, you're well met—I am glad I have the good fortune to light on you.

Lor. Have you wanted me on any urgent occasion? Pray what may be the business?

D. Phil. I have an humble petition to your lordship, and you must promise me to grant it, before I tell the consequence.

Lor. That's very fine indeed! that I must give my consent, and not know to what—I suppose this is something in relation to my daughter.

D. Phil.

D. Phil. No, my lord; what I come now to request is in behalf of a friend.

Lor. Be it as it will, Don Philip may command me in any thing, as far as the rules of honour will permit.

D. Phil. I hope, my lord, I shall never be so ungenerous as to require any thing that wou'd be a stain to your honour—but my petition to you is in behalf of Sir Charles Winlove, an English gentleman, who I am inform'd your lordship sent this day a prisoner to the castle.

Lor. D'ye know him?

D. Phil. Very well, my lord, and know him to be a man of honour—I ow'd my life to him when I was in England—and ever after there was such a friendship between us, that during my continuance there we were seldom or never asunder.

Lor. I am glad to hear so honourable a character of the gentleman—I am sorry for his misfortunes; but he has injur'd a particular friend of mine in relation to his daughter.

D. Phil. My lord, that proceeds from the wildness of his youth—we are all subject to such faults—Sir Charles is what we esteem a fine gentleman; and the English are all men of gallantry and intrigue—Besides, if a young lady is inclinable
to

to be kind, what brisk cavalier can refuse her favours?

Lor. I wish I cou'd serve him with honour.

D. Phil. You may: consider, to confine a young gentleman from his pleasures, is blasting him in the bloom of his life—Besides, liberty is the very soul of the English, and they had rather submit to honourable death, than bondage.

Lor. What can I do in this affair?

D. Phil. If your lordship will allow him to be a prisoner at large, till you hear farther from Madrid, my honour shall be the pledge for his security.

Lor. I shou'd be willing to consent to this, were I to follow my own inclinations—but his commitment to the castle is for murder.

D. Phil. My lord, I know the circumstances of the story, and the people concern'd in't, except the young lady—therefore, if you'll believe me, when I left Madrid, the wounded cavalier was not actually dead—nay, there was some hopes of his recovery.

Lor. I had no such intimation in the letter I receiv'd this morning—but now I think on't, my friend may write so, because I shou'd secure his daughter—Are you sure of this?

D. Phil. Upon my honour, my lord, I am.

Lor. Then for once I'll yield to your desires—

Follow

Follow me, and I'll give you my signet—The keeper knowing you, will obey you at the sight of it—But remember I put my honour into your hands, therefore use it with discretion.

D. Phil. My lord, you may depend on it—Even friendship itself shou'd not win me to betray my trust. [Exeunt.

SCENE, *The castle.*

Enter Sir Charles and Aspin.

Sir Cha. Certainly never man was so unfortunate—Sure the fates have join'd in conspiracy to plague me in my amours—Nay, even the winds to compleat my ruin have oppos'd my passage to England—A very fine comfort 'tis indeed—Here am I in confinement, without a friend to come to my assistance—What the devil shall I do in this exigence of fortune!

Asp. Ay, think Sir—we are in a fine place indeed—See what it is to be a great man! The governor provides you with lodgings here in the metropolitan castle, where, for the security of your person he orders you a retinue of guards, as if in the king's palace; but methinks these honours, Sir, have a very scurvy countenance—Pray heaven

we an't exalted to the highest *posss* of the nation.

Sir Cha. I don't know what to think—The governor is certainly a man of quality, and can have no other view in this than the service of his country—All that makes me dubious is, whether I am a prisoner for my own sake, or the lady's.

Asp. For both, Sir; but here comes one that will solve the riddle—A woman in a VEIL—There's certainly witchcraft in these women; for no sooner name a she-devil, but you find her at your elbow.

Enter Flora VEIL'D.

Flo. Cavalier! I come from a fair lady that was taken a prisoner with you this morning—Read that.

[Gives him a letter.]

Sir Cha. How does she bear her confinement?

Flo. Like a turtle moaning for its mate—The poor lady has fretted till she's in the spleen.

Sir Cha. I am sorry that I shou'd be the cause of her misfortunes—But vexations in love are like cloudy April showers; they bring forth the flowers of delight, to be chear'd by the warmth of the sun in its full lustre—But now for the letter.

Asp. They say a witch commonly appears against ill weather, like a porpus before a storm—Now prithee,

prithee, damsel, what can we prognosticate from the sight of you?

Flo. Prithee, fellow, learn more manners, and to be less pert in your discourse.

Asp. Nay, if you talk of being pert, commend me to a chambermaid, faith—But prithee, child, don't affect the airs of your mistress thus—I an't so damnably in love with you.

Sir Cha. Hold your tongue, firrah—My little emissary, tell the lady I'll wait on her at night according to her command—till when, farewell.

Flo. Don't fail.

Asp. You'll wait on her at night! Ha, ha, ha, Sir, 'tis already dark—therefore, if you have the keys of the castle in your pocket, let us shut the doors after us, and take up with another new lodging.

Sir Cha. Sirrah, I have a key, and a gold one too—Look here rascal—this, by the virtue of a glittering smile, can make the prison-doors fly open, and turn confinement into liberty.

Asp. Why, truly, it has an alluring look—but, methinks, a little aqua fortis now wou'd be of much more service.

Sir Cha. Why, you blockhead, d'ye think I intend to apply it to the bars, to break jail?

Asp.

Asp. Ay, Sir, if you intend to keep your appointment with the lady.

Sir Cha. Yes, I do intend to keep it, and therefore this goes to the keeper.

Asp. So it may—But I believe he has more wit than to give you your freedom, if it does.

Sir Cha. You are mistaken, firrah—What! Can it bribe a favourite to betray his prince, a senate their country, or a courtier his nearest friend—yet fail to tempt such fellows as jail-keepers to be perfidious to their trust?

Asp. One question more, Sir—Have you quite forgot Fidelia?

Sir Cha. The absence of an old mistress makes room for a new one—Therefore I have blotted her from my fancy, like a painter that strikes one form out of his cloth, to lay in another.

Asp. Sir, consider, and don't run headlong thus to your own destruction.

Enter Don Philip.

D. Phil. Aspin turning philosopher!

Sir Cha. Ay, Don Philip, my servant apes a philosopher, like a cobbler that leaves his stall for a tub, and sets up for one of our reformed teachers.

D. Phil. Perhaps he fancies himself inspir'd, and
thinks

thinks to deliver you by his inspiration to another place—I'm sure I'm sorry to see you where you are.

Sir Cha. Don Philip you are happy in the affections of a fair lady—Therefore, let not your concern for me be an interruption in your pleasure.

D. Phil. My mistress and my friend share my heart—and I can never rejoice in one, when I am concern'd for the other—Is there any thing I can serve you in?

Sir Cha. There is—You know I told you this morning I had struck up a new amour—I can't tell you the lady's name, for she's a stranger to me—But had I my liberty, I might have the happiness of seeing her to-night.

D. Phil. Very well, Sir Charles—I find 'tis not in the power of fortune to reclaim you.

Sir Cha. No, faith; I am resolv'd to overcome her ill-nature by laughing at it—And let what will happen, it shall never alter my humour, nor be an interruption to my pleasures.

D. Phil. Very finely resolv'd indeed—But suppose, Sir Charles, I shou'd gain you your freedom now, what security shall I have of your return?

Sir Cha. By the honour of an Englishman I'll return again.

Asp.

Asp. I hope he'll have more wit than to keep his word though. [*Aside.*]

D. Phil. Enough—Here, who waits there?

Enter Keeper.

D. Phil. D'ye know this signet?

Keep. Yes, 'tis my lord governor's.

D. Phil. I command you, by virtue of this, to shew that gentleman the same respect as to myself—Give him his liberty—I'll answer it to the governor.

Keep. I obey your orders.

Sir Cha. Here, take this for your civility.

Keep. Sir, I thank you.

[*Exit.*]

D. Phil. Now you have your liberty! You must take me along with you.

Sir Cha. No, I won't draw you into dangers—that wou'd be an ill return for so great an obligation.

D. Phil. That excuse won't serve—I am resolv'd to see this mistress of yours, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. Don't take it ill if I refuse you—For even Pylades and Orestes had their separate secrets—This lady is a woman of quality, and, shou'd I serve her so, she'll resent it.

D. Phil. How can you be satisfied she's a woman of quality, if you never saw her face?

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Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. Her manners and appearance are a convincing proof of that.

D. Phil. I thought, Sir Charles, you had known the ways of your own country better—Perhaps she may be a courtesan.

Sir Cha. No, no, I am convinc'd of the contrary—Those ladies are easily distinguish'd by their airs from women of quality—You may depend on it I am not so easily impos'd upon.

D. Phil. I won't press farther then against your inclinations—Good night ; I'll see you again to-morrow ! [Exit.

Sir Cha. So ! Now fortune begins to turn her wheel—Some lucky spoke may rise quickly to my advantage—Aspin, lend me your pistol for my security.

Asp. Must I stay behind, Sir ?—'Tis a servant's duty to follow his master's heels—Besides, I don't like this place for an amusement.

Sir Cha. Come along then—It grows late, therefore I'll take a short turn, and wait for the happy signal.

SCENE,

SCENE, *The governor's house.*

Enter Leonora.

Leo. The invention of a wit, the courage of a knight-errant, and the conduct of a politician, are all comprehended in an adventurous lover.—First we lay the scene of an assignation; then enter into the part, and if caught in the action, have a thousand incidents to bring us off again.—I'm now assur'd, let what will interpose, love and resolution can never fail of success.

Enter Flora.

Is the coast clear?

Flo. Yes, Madam—The governor's gone to his repose.

Leo. Where's Fidelia?

Flo. In the same condition.

Leo. And Don Philip?

Flo. He's just come in, and retir'd to his apartment.

Leo. Are all the family at rest?

D 2

Flo.

Flo. There's not one stirring in the house, Madam.

Leo. Then seek out for the cavalier. [*Exit* Flora. So! now I have nothing left me to fear, but a disappointment from Sir Charles—Yet why that? We young girls can break the prison of a father's house to fly to our admirers, therefore such a gallant as he can never want a stratagem to release himself—besides, if Love's his guide, Fortune must be his assistant—but here they come.

Enter Flora, and Sir Charles.

Flo. Tread softly, Leonora's in the next room undressing, and the governor lies near.

Sir Cha. Thanks to my stars, that thro' the folds of darkness, I'm come, at length, to the regions of light.

Flo. I'll retire, that I may give you notice if any thing should happen. [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. Egad, this girl's worth gold—she knows civilly how to withdraw, and leave a pair of lovers together.

Leo. You're a fine courtier truly, to let a lady, when she comes to see you, be carry'd away in captivity—I thought by this time to have heard that

that you had broke your prifon, flain your guards, and conquer'd whole armies to have gain'd my freedom—then you had been a lover indeed !

Sir Cha. Madam, I thought it wou'd be a much greater pleasure in a happy meeting to compleat my bleffing, than to turn mad-man, and be run thro' for aiming at impossibilities.

Leo. This is a fatisfaction that every lover can give, becaufe 'tis a pleasure to him—but your death wou'd have chronicled my fame in romance, to have been read by young virgins in after-ages, that fuch-a-one lov'd me fo, he dy'd for the fake of me.

Sir Cha. Look'e, Madam, I am not fo romantic as to die for the fake of being read in a novel, to divert girls in the green-ficknefs—My intention is to live for the end I was created, to propagate my generation—therefore, as I am a prifoner upon parole, and muft return by break of day to the caftle : let us reap the advantages of love, night, and opportunity.

Leo. A fine fpeech indeed ! you are like the atheift, all for pleasures at the prefent, and never have a thought of futurity—I expected you wou'd have prov'd a Paris, at leaft—that is, have prof-

ferred to have carry'd me to a safe harbour, and there to have given yourself up for life, as a personal security for your love.

Sir Cha. For life—too much resembles marriage, which is the disagreeable part of love—besides, my honour's engaged for my return.

Leo. Love is the nicest point of honour—therefore the engagement is of greater force—but I know the reason why you are thus reserv'd—you have a pre-engagement on your heart.

Sir Cha. 'Tis true, I have lov'd another; but one love, like one power, yields to a superior.

Leo. Very well, Sir Charles, I see you are too inconstant to be trusted—for now, by your own confession, shou'd you see another, I must yield your heart to her beauty, because you may chance to think it superior to mine.

Sir Cha. Madam, that's impossible—for the charms of your wit so conspire with those of your beauty, that they must fix ev'ry inconstancy itself.

Leo. I esteem such flights but as compliments, Sir Charles—and a compliment to a lady, like a poetical flattering panegyric, is the severest satire—for it shows the persons what they ought to be in the reverse of what they are.

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. What arguments can I then use to convince you of my affections?

Leo. None. I shou'd as soon take an atheist for a man of sense; a wit for a politician; or a politician for a man of honour; as a libertine, like Sir Charles, for a lover.

Sir Cha. But, Madam, can you have so mean an opinion of your own desert, as to believe a heart that has been your captive, can ever break your chains?

Leo. No! but you have been false already, and inconstancy is as bad a proof of love, as scurrility is of wit—the one proceeds from a false genius, and the other from a degenerate passion.

Sir Cha. Come, this is trifling away the happy minutes. [*A pistol fir'd.*] Ha!

Leo. What means that noise!

Sir Cha. This is certainly my dog of a servant!

Enter Flora.

Flo. Haste, or you'll be discovered; the governor's rising!

Sir Cha. Where shall I hide myself!

Leo. Alas! here's no conveniency—therefore, fly quickly!

Flo. If he goes out at the door, the governor meets him !

Sir Cha. What shall I do then !

Lor. Jacomo, Pedro, lights there ! [Within.]

Leo. They're coming here !

Flo. Then there's no time to trifle !—Out, out of window, Sir, quickly !

Sir Cha. Out of the window ! so, shall I break my neck, to preserve a lady's reputation.

Lor. Lights, lights there, quickly ! [Within.]

Leo. For heav'ns sake, Sir Charles, fly ! for my honour, and your life !

Sir Cha. Fly ! 'Sdeath, Madam, what do you mean ? D'ye think I have wings like a Cupid to fly out of the window !

Leo. Your stay will ruin me, Sir Charles !—besides, you may safely get by a balcony, from my closet into the court-yard !

Sir Cha. This comes now of making ill use of one's time. Well, I must run the risque ; but a pox on me, if ever I draw myself into these scrapes again. [Exit.]

Leo. What course shall we take now ?

Lor. Haste to my daughter's chamber there.

[Within.]
Some of you follow me, to search the court-yard.

Leo.

Leo. Hark ! there are some of them coming here !

Flo. Nay, then, out go the lights—Now, perhaps, they'll conclude we are at rest.

Leo. I shiver with apprehensions—My father will certainly find Sir Charles or his man in the courtyard !

Flo. That we must leave to fortune, Madam—In the mean time, let us retire softly, for fear we are discover'd. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sir Charles feeling his way.

Sir Cha. Vexations are always the fruits of an intrigue—What shall I do ? Where's my rascally servant ? The house is alarm'd, and I am in the dark within the verge of the governor's palace !

Enter Aspin.

Asp. I have rais'd the house with the report of my pistol, and now security's the word—Odd, 'tis very dark—Every step I have taken, I have knock'd my head against some post or wall, till I have almost beat out my brains.

Sir Cha. If I am not mistaken, I hear the tread of a man.

Asp.

Asp. I warrant you now, my master is so full of his sport with the lady, that he hears nothing of this disturbance—Odd, I can but laugh to think how he'll look when he is catch'd in the nick of his performance.

Sir Cha. There's certainly somebody in this yard—If I don't take care, I may chance to lose my life before I know where I am—therefore, old friend, stand to my assistance.

Asp. Hark, I hear somebody—they steal softly, thinking to catch me here before I am aware of 'em—These Spaniards are damn'd fellows—they love to run a man through in the dark—Odd, I'll up with my heels, and trust fear to be my guide—O lud, I am caught! Help! help!

[*Runs against Sir Charles.*]

Sir Cha. Whoever you are, if you offer to stir an inch, you're a dead man.

[*Draws.*]

Asp. Oh lud, Sir, save my life, and I'll peach—I'll tell you the whole plot.

Sir Cha. Oh! Is it your worship, Sir?—This is all owing to you, you rascal.

Lor. Have you search'd every place carefully? Follow me, some of you, to the court-yard. [*Within.*]

Sir Cha. Egad the enemy will be at our heels presently—Sirrah, march after me by the sound of
of

of my tread—Ha! What have I stumbled against?
A chair! It seems set in my way by fortune—
Lights are coming—I'll in here, and hide myself.

[Opens the chair.]

Asp. Sir, let me come in too, for if I am taken,
I shall either be hang'd like a dog, or knock'd o'the
head like an ox.

Sir Cha. Sirrah, here's no room—therefore shift
for yourself.

[Goes into the chair.]

Asp. They're all coming; for heaven's sake, let
me sit upon your knee, Sir.

Sir Cha. Get out you rascal, I shall be discover'd
by your folly.

[Shuts himself in.]

Asp. This is very barbarous—I wish I cou'd find
out a horse-pond—I'd run up to my neck to secure
myself—Here they come—If I am caught, I'll be
reveng'd and peach, I'm resolv'd.

[Exit.]

Enter Lorenzo, and servants.

Lor. Have you been at Leonora's chamber?

1st Serv. Yes, my Lord—and I believe she's in
her bed, for I saw no light.

Lor. I thought I heard somebody leap out of her
window—Secure the gates.

Enter

Enter Don Philip.

Lor. Don Philip! Have you caught the alarm too?

D. Phil. My Lord, I heard a noise in my room, and came to see what's the matter.

Lor. We thought somebody had broke in—but we can find no one but our own family.

D. Phil. Have you made a diligent search, my Lord?

Lor. We have search'd almost every where—except any one's hid in that chair.

D. Phil. Give me the light, I'll see —

[Opens the chair, Sir Cha. nods at him to take no notice.]

Lor. Is there any one?

D. Phil. No, my Lord—Death and confusion! Sir Charles there! *[Aside.]*

Lor. 'Twas a mistake betwixt sleep and waking—I'll retire to rest again—A good repose to you Don Philip. *[Exit.]*

D. Phil. The like to your Lordship. —

So, they are all retir'd now, to their respective chambers—My Lord, would have persuaded me this was an illusion—So he thinks to deceive me, whilst I deceive him—We wou'd both hide the disgrace

disgrace from each other.——Hift, Sir Charles you may come forth now.

Sir Cha. Dear Philip thou art the beft of friends.

D. Phil. Am I not? to be made a property to my own fhame: Is this generous ufage?

Sir Cha. What mean you?

D. Phil. You have fupplanted me in Leonora.

Sir Cha. 'Tis a miftake — I came to a young Lady that's a prifoner—who was taken with me.

D. Phil. That's a poor evasion, and below a man of honour—I know the reafon now, why you refus'd to admit of my company—befides, there's no fuch perfon in the houfe—Look'e, Sir Charles, I fhall expect fatisfaction.

Sir Cha. Look'e, you are mad — for jealousy is no other than madnefs — I tell you there is fuch a lady; perhaps you may be fo blinded with love, that you may not regard any body in the family but the governor and his daughter—but if what I fay is not true, to-morrow you fhall have what fatisfaction you require.

D. Phil. Till then farewel. [Exit.

Sir Cha. Farewel, till you come to your fenfes again—So! I have brought myfelf to a fine pafs indeed—I have kill'd one hot-brain'd fool for his jealousy, and now to compleat my misfortune, he
too

too has catch'd the infection—What shall I do? If I stay here and trust the inquisition, 'tis ten times more unmerciful than a Middlesex jury—A man can never have fair play for his life—to touch cold iron, and come off like a gentleman—Shall I then lay hold on this opportunity, and make my escape! No! They shall never say an Englishman's so base a coward.

Let the hot Spaniard boast his virtue here,
And honour's loss in jealous notions fear.
A Briton scorns to prove his country's shame,
And rather hazards life, than taints his fame.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The governor's house.

Enter Leonora and Don Philip.

D. Phil. COME, come Madam, I'm not to be so impos'd upon! you may deny it as long as you please, but you can't persuade me out of my senses—Did not I, last night, actually see Sir Charles hid under your window in the court-yard?

Leo. Suppose you did, Sir?—

D. Phil.

D. Phil. Then, Madam, I can suppose it to be no advantage to your character—S'death, am I to be made a property! a mere pander! to carry on an intrigue against my own honour?

Leo. Very well! go on, Sir, go on.

D. Phil. So I can, Madam. Is it prudent for a young lady, just upon her marriage, to entertain a cavalier alone at midnight—nay, in her own chamber too! unknown to her father, or any one that shou'd be the guardian of her honour?—Such conduct is mighty reputable indeed, Madam!——

Leo. Suppose such a person was here, Sir—is there no other place that cou'd entertain him but my apartment?—Am I the only person he cou'd come to?—Must I be accountable for his being here?

D. Phil. No, Madam, by no means—'Tis probable to believe a person of his quality, might have an affair with one of your servants only—S'death, d'ye take me for a fool! is there any other young lady in the house? Look'e, Madam, I shou'd not so tamely take this of Sir Charles, but that I scorn to insult a man in his misfortunes—however, I can be yet capable of resentment—for know, I'll immediately demand my contract of your father, and return back to Madrid.

[Going.]

Leo.

Leo. If I let him go, this may give room for suspicion, and suspicion will bring a discovery. [*Aside.* Hold, Sir—Not that 'tis worth my while to clear my innocence, for your sake, but for my father's: Know then, here is another young lady in this house.

D. Phil. Aye! who? tell me that pray, Madam?

Leo. The prisoner, Sir—I shall have a fine time to satisfy your scruples.

D. Phil. The prisoner! ha, ha, ha! you are both in the same story, I find—your scheme is excellently well laid—Were I a zealous dotard, or a British husband, perhaps I might be credulous enough to believe any thing—but this deceit won't take; it won't, Madam.

Leo. How! what indecency have I been guilty of to merit this usage?—but know, since you are still resolv'd to traduce my honour, there are those, Sir, that will vindicate it—This is not to be borne with patience!

D. Phil. Nay, Madam, don't disorder yourself thus—for you may henceforth meet Sir Charles as often as you please—and expose your reputation as much as you think fit; it shall never give me any further uneasiness I can assure you, Madam.

Leo.

Leo. Insolent! before you had resolv'd to treat me after this manner, you might, at least, have ask'd my father if there was no such person in the house!—Is this the return for all his friendship? But here comes the lady herself, I shall leave her to give you satisfaction.—Provoking man! [*Exit.*]

D. Phil. Ha! what do I see? Here comes a young lady indeed! I'm afraid jealousy has carry'd me too far—Soft! I'll lay aside this heat a little, if possible.—

Enter Fidelia.

But still methinks my choler rises so, I know not how to suppress it.

Enter Leonora, and Flora behind.

Leo. Here we may learn their discourse. Methinks, tho' I am partly in fault, I am exasperated at such treatment.

Fide. Ha! who's here? What can be the meaning of this!

D. Phil. Nay, Madam, don't start—I hope the sight of me has not put you in a consternation.

Fide. Sir, I came to meet a friend, and being lost in thought, pardon me, if I was a little surpriz'd.

D. Phil. Madam, whoever you came to meet, and however strange it may seem to you, you are the only person I cou'd wish for at present.

Fide. Me, Sir! I don't know that ever I saw you in my life before!

D. Phil. Very like so, Madam—But however you may be surpriz'd, you have been the cause that has rais'd this disorder in my soul, and 'tis in your power alone to appease it.

Fide. I the cause of your disorder, Sir!—certainly the man's mad! *[Aside.*

D. Phil. Pardon me, if my temper's a little ruffled.—Perhaps I may be impertinent—but if you have the least compassion, I beg you answer me to one particular.

Fide. With all my heart, Sir, if it lies in my power.—What can the man mean! He looks as if he was distracted! *[Aside.*

D. Phil. Answer me directly and sincerely, Madam—for my scruples are of as great a consequence, as those of troubled minds, that apply to casuists for ease.

Fide. Sir, you surprize me wonderfully—What satisfaction can I, that am a stranger, give you?

D. Phil. The greatest! and only in one trivial answer.

Fide.

Fide. What is it, Sir?

D. Phil. D'ye know such a person as Sir Charles Winlove, Madam?

Fide. How, Sir! your question startles me, indeed.

D. Phil. It need not; for, as I am a cavalier, I ask you for no treacherous design — therefore be kind, and ease me with an answer.

Fide. How earnest and concern'd he seems! Sure he has no design to offer love — Perhaps he may come as a spy to betray me — I know not what to think. *[Aside.]*

D. Phil. Madam, I conjure you by all the softness of your sex, to free me from my doubts — for the whole quiet of my soul depends on what you say.

Fide. I will — whate'er the consequence may prove, I leave to you — Know then, I scorn on any terms to deny my affection for Sir Charles.

D. Phil. This satisfaction cheers me indeed! — Curse on my jealous folly! — Are you a native of Valencia, Madam?

Fide. No, Sir, I am totally a stranger to it — Love, that has been my guide to ruin, was my director hither. — But now, Sir, answer me a question

in my turn.——Are you acquainted with Sir Charles?

Leo. Nay, if they come to particulars, we are lost again. [*Aside.*

D. Phil. Madam, I know him well—He is my dearest friend.—How have I wrong'd him with suspicions! [*Aside.*

Fide. Your friend, say you! Can you give me any tidings of him, Sir?

D. Phil. I question not, but he is return'd in safety to the castle—I am now immediately going to him about some affairs of consequence; in the mean time depend on my interest to serve you both. [*Exit.*

Fide. In the castle! said he so, or did I dream? Oh! for the wings of Love to haste and be convinc'd. [*Going.*

Leo. So, here's another hare started—Where are you going in such haste, Fidelity? [*Comes forward.*

Fide. Madam, I hear that the cavalier, that I'm in search of, is a prisoner in the castle; therefore, I must immediately fetch my VEIL, and hasten to see him. [*Exit.*

Leo. Now am I more unfortunate than ever!—What stop shall I put to this?

Flo. Madam, you must again consult your wit: you see discoveries gather like clouds, and I'm
afraid

afraid the main storm will come rattling upon us immediately.

Leo. I was never so provok'd in my life, as I was at Don Philip's jealousies, and all this I undergo for a person that I'm not secure of—For as Fidelity was the first object of Sir Charles's affections, she'll still be the mistress of his heart—and possession there, as in the law, will make her eleven points before me.

Flo. Then, Madam, in my humble opinion, 'twill be better to drop this amour—This lady will, in the end, discover all—therefore, I think it better to forsake a victory than to lose it.

Leo. I am of the same opinion—But what shall I do in this affair?

Flo. E'en follow the example of declining courtiers—that is, whilst you've possession of his affections, think 'tis more honour to resign than to be remov'd.

Leo. But I mean, now I have gone so far, how shall I retire without hazarding my reputation?

Flo. Shou'd you trust his love, even the success of your amour will be of ill consequence—Therefore, appoint another assignation with him—let her into the secret, so far as not to give her uneasiness, and carry her with you to meet him.

Leo. Prudently advis'd—But see, she comes: I must not let her go, for that will ruin all.

Enter Fidelia.

Are you resolv'd upon this adventure, Madam?

Fide. Yes: now I know where Sir Charles is, methinks, I am all impatience to see him!

Leo. I'd advise you to apply yourself to second thoughts, and ere you fix upon a resolution, to weigh well the consequence of this proceeding.

Fide. The consequence!

Leo. Aye: consider, you are no more mistress of your liberty—but are here now in confinement.

Fide. In confinement, Madam! I desire you to explain your meaning?

Leo. Then, in short, to clear up the mystery at once; my father is an intimate friend of yours—and for the sake of that friendship, he has here engag'd to secure you.

Fide. Am I so barbarously betray'd then! I thought, Madam, I had come to the governor's daughter for refuge, and not to a prison to be confin'd in.

Leo. I can't but make an allowance to your surprise—and, therefore, yield to your resentment.

But

But I could wish, you wou'd make yourself a little easy—for, perhaps, I might yet propose a method for your satisfaction.—Ha ! my father ! for heaven's sake calm yourself a little.

Enter Lorenzo.

Lor. What makes the lady appear in such a disorder, Leonora ?

Flo. Now the cloud is gather'd, it begins to break before we are prepar'd for't. [*Aside.*]

Leo. A trifle only, my lord.

Fide. No, Madam, 'tis no trifle—My lord, I think I have reason to be so.

Lor. How, Madam !—I hope you have receiv'd no ill-treatment from any of my family.

Leo. The lady was going abroad without your leave, and I believe she may take it ill, because I told her the consequence.

Lor. How, Madam ! I am sorry you shou'd be led into such an error.

Fide. My lord, I confess a point of ceremony might have oblig'd me to have ask'd your leave—but either there is a mistake on your side ; or if you rightly knew me, and the cause why I am here, I believe you wou'd not refuse me.

Lor. 'Tis because I know both, Madam, I do refuse you—and tho' you may command what freedom you please in the house, I beg you still to remember you're a prisoner.

Fide. A prisoner ! Upon what account ? By what authority, my lord ?

Lor. Madam, my authority was never wont to be call'd in question—besides, I thought I had satisfy'd you as to that, when I seiz'd you yesterday with Sir Charles Winlove.

Fide. Seiz'd me yesterday with Sir Charles Winlove ! What does your lordship mean ?—In short, I believe you're impos'd upon.

Lor. Madam, if my senses are right, I am certain I am not impos'd upon—and you must pardon me, if I can't consent to be so—Did not I bring you yesterday here in custody ?

Fide. No, my lord : this lady and her servant, can witness I came here alone, and on my own accord.

Lor. To contradict the fair, may seem a breach of respect due to the sex—therefore, I can make you no other answer than this, that when young ladies are in love, 'tis no wonder if they are thus forgetful.

Fide.

Fide. Madam, I desire that you'll speak, and satisfy my lord as to your knowledge in this affair.

Leo. Madam, you see my lord is already satisfy'd—Besides, since you are wound in the toil, I shan't draw myself into the snare to deliver you.

[*Aside.*

Fide. My lord, this is very hard, thus to be shut out of the light of reason, to remain in the darkness of mystery.

Ser. Come along there—bring him before my lord governor.

[*Within.*

Lor. Ha! what new disturbance is this?

Enter servants with Aspin.

Asp. Gentlemen, dear gentlemen, don't collar me so furiously—consider, to choke a man without a halter is against law—besides, I am no Turk, and therefore am not ambitious of the honour of being strangled like a Grand Vizier.

Leo. Ha! 'tis Sir Charles's man—perhaps this may be of an ill consequence.

Lor. Let go your hold of him. What's the meaning of all this?

1st Ser. My lord, this is the fellow that made the disturbance last night—for, searching him, we found this pistol conceal'd in one of his pockets.

2d Ser.

2d Ser. My lord, we believe he came upon a very traiterous design—for we discover'd him hid under one of the maids beds.

Lor. A very pretty fellow indeed!—Take him away, I'll consider of a punishment for the rascal.

Asp. This is an admirable place for law and discipline—Priests enjoin penance for lenten mortification, and judges hang folks without hearing their defence.

Lor. D'ye presume to murmur in my presence, firrah? What have you to say for yourself?

Asp. Say! why nothing, my lord! I am unprovided with counsel, and therefore, my motion is, that I may defer my trial.

Lor. Prithce, fellow, answer me to the purpose—What are you?

Asp. Not guilty, my lord; not guilty.

Lor. I mean, firrah, who are you? What's your business here?

Asp. My lord, as to who I am, I am my master's servant; and as to my business here, if you don't like my company, I am ready to take my leave.

[Going.]

Lor. Stop him:—I never saw so impudent a fellow before.

Flo.

Flo. They say, Madam, he's an Englishman's servant; but I'm sure he has an Irish assurance.

Leo. Pray heav'n he has assurance enough to bring himself off; for I'm afraid this will open the scene, and immediately discover all. [*Aside.*]

Lor. Hark'e fellow—give some account of yourself; what profession are you of?

Asp. Why, my lord, I wait upon my master—In his chamber I'm his valet in ordinary; sometimes his pimp in extraordinary; and commonly, have the honour to be of his cabinet council.

Lor. Thou art an excellent rascal, indeed!—Prithee, fellow, who is your master?

Asp. So! these great folks are as forgetful of every thing, as they are of their promises [*Aside.*].—Is then my face a stranger to your lordship?

Lor. Sirrah, if you had gold enough in your pocket to answer the brags of your countenance, you might outvie the most impudent courtier in Europe—but don't presume to trifle with me thus any longer.

Asp. Then to refresh your memory, my lord, I am Sir Charles Winlove's servant, and your lordship's prisoner at discretion.

Lor. Ha! I had forgot the rogue, indeed!—So, Madam, does the scene now begin to open or not?

Fide.

Fide. My lord, I am innocent of the charge ; and therefore, am satisfy'd this can have no relation to me.

Lor. 'Tis well, Madam ; this will appear immediately.

Leo. I'm afraid, Flora, now comes the clue that will unravel the mystery at once. [*Aside.*]

Lor. In the first place, rascal, what provok'd you to make such a disturbance ?

Asp. Why, my lord, I was assaulted in your lordship's court-yard by a great mastiff, and I used that pistol as an instrument to allay his fury.

Lor. In the mean time, where was your master ?

Asp. Only playing a game or two, with my lady, my lord.

Lor. Very well, Madam !—Go on, firrah.

Asp. Nay, my lord, I know no more, than that he was carry'd away from me by a she-confident of the lady's, vulgarly call'd a chamber-maid.

Flo. Here's a treacherous rogue ! [*Aside.*]

Lor. How ! Flora—did you conduct him to the lady's chamber ?

Flo. I, my lord !—Certainly the fellow has not the impudence to say so !

Asp. Nay, I had not such cat's eyes to know any one in the dark ; but methinks your voice agrees much

much with that pert lady's that brought the letter to my master.

Leo. So, this rascal will betray all. [*Aside.*]

Lor. Then this was a concerted business, I find.—Sirrah, let me hear no more of these practices.—Discharge the fellow, and let him return to his master.

Asp. So, they say, confess and be hang'd!—But I am come as clear off by turning evidence, as if I had bought off the verdict of a jury. [*Exit.*]

Lor. So, Madam, I hope now you'll no longer deny your correspondence with Sir Charles Winlove—But I am sorry, for the sake of my respect to your father, to see you still so regardless of your honour.

Fide. My lord, believe me, I am innocent—and if Sir Charles has had any affair here—'tis with some of your own family.

Lor. I cou'd almost wish to be ignorant of such convincing proofs in relation to this affair—but you must pardon me, if I grow now to be more cautious of your proceedings—Flora, shou'd I find you in the least concern'd in this, you shall no longer remain in my house. [*Exit.*]

Leo. Now is my time! [*Aside.*—Methinks your countenance, Madam, speaks a surprize at these proceedings.

Fide.

Fide. I own I am so confus'd, that I scarce know whether this is reality, or an illusion.

Leo. I see, Fidelia, you are a little acquainted with the artifices of love, tho' you are caught in the snare—Can't you dive into the mystery of this?

Fide. An ignorant innocence is peculiar to our sex! and to dive into mystery, they say, is a sin in any one but a brother of the profession—therefore, I shall let it rest, till it unravels itself.

Leo. Were I in your case, I should rather be fired with a woman's curiosity, than be so unmov'd at the turns of my fortune.

Fide. I am already satisfy'd of my misfortunes; therefore, curiosity might betray me to a knowledge that, perhaps, wou'd heighten 'em.

Leo. Alas, Fidelia! I am in as great a concern as you are—for my quiet is equally at stake with yours—but if you will consent to come into my measures, there is yet a way to make us both easy.

Fide. Propose it: for methinks I cou'd embrace any method that cou'd bring me to the sight of Sir Charles.

Leo. Know then, my father has contracted me to one, who has all the qualities that can make him agreeable—notwithstanding which, I have lately entertain'd the addresses of an English cavalier, who now proves to be the very same you were speaking of.

Fide.

Fide. What ! Sir Charles Winlove, Madam ?

Leo. The same.

Fide. How ! after having ruin'd me, can he be so perfidious to make his addresses to another !—False man !

Leo. Alas, all men are the same, Fidelia !—In short, they use us as children do their toys ; are fond of us at first—but quickly neglect us to follow new fancies.—But to proceed—Yesterday, I met this Sir Charles at his lodgings, where my father came, attended with officers, and seiz'd us together !—He was carry'd to the castle, and I was brought home conceal'd in a VEIL ; where, by the circumstances of the story, I find he mistook me for you.

Fide. Wou'd you be willing, Madam, to resign your interest in Sir Charles, provided I would stand to the rest ?

Leo. Yes, Fidelia, you shall now see me throw off the softness of a lover for the craft of a politician, to serve you—And as a first proof of my friendship, I'll write to him as from myself : Flora shall carry the letter ; and if he can get his liberty, I'll engage he shall meet us in two hours at another place.

Fide. This is as I cou'd wish, Madam.

Leo.

Leo. One thing more.—I overheard your discourse with that cavalier who is to be my husband—I see his jealousies are cur'd, and all points are now clear'd to my content.

Fide. Let us then be quick in our proceedings.

Leo. With all my heart—we'll now retire, and I'll write immediately to Sir Charles.—Flora, be ready within call to attend us. [*Exeunt.*]

Flo. So, my lady is now come off again to her satisfaction.—If our sex were as prudent in resolution, as they are quick at invention, they would not prove such weak fools to the men.—However, I have learnt now, if occasion serves, to carry on an intrigue of my own—for I find, tho' dangers happen from love, wit never fails to turn the tables upon fortune.

Thus, when from fate our disappointments fall,
Woman's invention can o'ercome 'em all.

ACT

ACT V. SCENE I.

The governor's house.

Enter Lorenzo and Alonzo.

Lor. **M**Y old friend, once more I congratulate your arrival to Valencia—You are come in good time to vindicate the honour of your family.

Alon. Come in a good time, say you! No, I am come in a very ill time, I can't so much as thank you for your civility.—Hark'e, prithee look in my face now—Am not I very much alter'd? Have not I something very rueful in my countenance?

Lor. What makes you fancy so?

Alon. Because, methinks, I am no better than a raven, I can croak nothing but bad news.

Lor. Come, come, be cheerful; all will go well again.

Alon. Yes, truly! all is like to go mighty well, indeed!—My son-in-law, that was to be, has been desperately wounded; my daughter's run away, and my family's disgraced for ever; and you expect me to be cheerful, do you!

Lor. Nay, but hear reason.

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Alon.

Alon. Nay, but I won't hear reason! What have I to do with reason, when I come in search of revenge?—You say, you have 'em both in your custody!

Lor. Suppose I have! You tell me the wounded cavalier is recovered, then what pretence can I have for detaining Sir Charles?

Alon. No matter, I'll conceal his recovery, and have the dog suffer for his death.

Lor. Fye! I am ashamed to see your passion so overcome your reason—Suppose your daughter loves him?

Alon. Loves him! 'Sdeath, who doubts but she does love him!—What, because the silly baggage has been so weak as to suffer him to ruin her, you would have me play the old dotard, and be as great a fool as my daughter!

Lor. Still you mistake me.—Why will you endeavour thus to widen the breach, when I would bring matters to a reconciliation?

Alon. To a reconciliation!—Ha, ha, ha! this is pleasant, indeed!—The son of a whore has stole away my daughter, and for ought I know, she may have her belly up to her mouth; and you talk of bringing matters to a reconciliation!

Lor. But suppose she should love him; and he should have an equal passion for her?

Alon.

Alon. Why then, my curse be an equal portion for them both!

Lor. Perhaps, he would consent to marry her.

Alon. Marry her! no, no, no! The young fellows of this age, are not such fools as to debauch women, and afterwards to marry 'em.

Lor. Nay, but——

Alon. Nay, but I know what it is to be a young fellow! I tell you their vows always dissolve with virginities, and when the fort's surrender'd, all former promises are void o'course.

Lor. There are, indeed, too many of the fair sex in that unhappy condition: but why should you judge so hardly of your daughter?

Alon. Why shou'd I not judge so? Did she not run away with him? Has she not a sanguine complexion, and he a brawny back? Is she not a promising girl, and he a sprightly young fellow?—— Then, why may not my daughter happen to be with child?

Lor. Still you perplex yourself with fancied injuries only—Was she ever loose in her behaviour?

Alon. No, I always believ'd her to be a very modest girl: But now, she has certainly tasted of the tree of knowledge—he has open'd her senses, and enter'd her into her rudiments.

Lor. Did you ever love your daughter?

Alon. Yes, too well; tho' indeed, she was a very good girl, and deserv'd it—Nay, now I think of her, the tears of affection still come into my eyes!

Lor. Indulge that tenderness, and reason will come o'course—D'ye think I am your friend?

Alon. How shou'd I know that? We were friends once, indeed!—That is, when we were young—Then we us'd to drink our bottle together, ruin'd as many girls, and made as many cuckolds as any rake-hells in Europe—But now, the scene is chang'd: you are my lord governor! time, absence, and state-affairs may have drove me out of your memory.

Lor. Come, you shall see I am still your friend; have patience, and I'll endeavour to bring all to a right understanding.

Alon. Patience!

Lor. Nay, nay, suppress your choler, 'till you see whether you have reason for it—I'll now immediately go, and propose an honourable treaty to Sir Charles: in the mean time I beg you to retire, and not see your daughter 'till I return to tell you my success. [Exit.

Alon. Your return will bring me a fine account of success, indeed!—We men are certainly most unhappy

unhappy wretches—When we are young, we get children in the heat of our blood, who, when we come to be old, grow disobedient, and break our hearts in order to get into our estates—Well, I'll say no more, but I'll send this rebel daughter of mine to a nunnery, and there she shall mortify for the sins of the flesh—but for that rogue that has debauch'd her, if ever I see him again, I'll have his blood, tho' I meet him in a sanctuary. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E, *The castle.*

Enter Sir Charles Winlove and Don Philip.

D. Phil. Sir Charles, I am now convinc'd of your innocence—My suspicions were the fond errors of my love, and as such I hope you'll esteem 'em.

Sir Cha. I do; when I consider that jealous eyes always see thro' a microscope, that magnifies the meanest trifles, to seem as of the greatest consequence—but had you not been my friend, I shou'd not so tamely have submitted to such usage.

D. Phil. I own the rashness of my folly to be great—Let fools have the obstinacy to persist in their errors—a generous soul esteems it rather as a point of honour, when convinc'd, to acknowledge 'em.—Therefore, now let us turn the discourse—

I'll assure you, Sir Charles, I think the captive is very beautiful.

Sir Cha. Beautiful as ever I saw!

D. Phil. But still, methinks, my lady excels her.

Sir Cha. Every lover is apt to think his own mistress the most deserving—Mine has wit as well as beauty; and where the lusciousness of one may cloy the appetite, the other whets it again, and makes all her charms as agreeable as ever.

D. Phil. Wit and beauty are two irresistible weapons, indeed; but, I find, you are in a fair way to succeed in your hopes.

Sir Cha. No, faith—Notwithstanding she has so many perfections, my success was but very indifferent: whether the inconstant star that governs the sex rul'd; I know not; but my reception prov'd as great a disappointment, as the accident afterwards did a surprize.

D. Phil. Oh! that was a meer feint, only to make a trial of your love! I find you are not rightly acquainted with the variety of a lady's humour.

Sir Cha. No, nor ever shall, if 'tis so much addicted to whimsey.

D. Phil. But a lover shou'd make it his business, first, to study the temper of his mistress, and then to study every method that may promote her pleasure.

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. Then I am not so much a lover as to submit my reason to frenzy—For to study the temper of a woman, is like searching out for the philosopher's stone—a man may spend his estate, run mad, and grow never the wiser.

D. Phil. Notwithstanding your harsh censure of the sex, I wish I knew the humour of my lady, so far as to gain remission for my folly.

Sir Cha. So, this is ever the consequence of jealousy—First, you quarrel with your mistress for no reason, and then are never easy till you're reconcil'd.

D. Phil. I own it is a weakness, indeed; but a Spaniard is so unfortunate in his passions, that he can no more avoid the rashness of jealousy, than he can expel the heat of his climate.—But what service, Sir Charles, can I do you now in your amour.

Sir Cha. Why then, once more to trust you as a friend, I have this day receiv'd a letter from the lady:—but sure there are such beauties in the style! not Ovid is more soft, nor Horace more satirical.

D. Phil. What are the contents of it?

Sir Cha. 'Tis a kind invitation to another appointment; but interspersed with reflections from an excellent talent of wit in relation to my servant's

carelessness :—Here, prithee read it, and give me your opinion.

Enter Aspin.

So ! Where have you been, firrah ?

Asp. Sir, I have run thro' as dangerous adventures as a knight-errant—but as I was predestinated to act the part of champion, I was prepar'd with armour accordingly.

Sir Cha. Were you so ? Prithee, let's hear the wonderful description of it.

Asp. Why, Sir, courage was the support of my back ; caution the defence of my breast ; wit was my noble head-piece ; and this pistol, the weapon with which I encounter'd death and destruction.

Sir Cha. That pistol, firrah ! What occasion had you last night to make it give such an alarm ?

Asp. Why, Sir, I was assaulted by no less than a fiery dragon—In short, a great mastiff flew at my throat, and had I not had the courage to have encounter'd his fury, I had certainly been torn in pieces.

D. Phil. Nay then, Sir Charles, you must never be angry with him for his valour—Aspin has now rival'd the fame of St. George—and I think his statue ought to be set up in memory of this atchievement, as a second honour to your country.

Asp.

Asp. What is past, was but a trial for the courage of a hero—But the next misfortune I fell into, requir'd the deepest policy of a statesman.

D. Phil. Aye! prithee what was that?

Asp. I was this morning discover'd by some of the servants, and carry'd, *vi & armis*, a prisoner before my lord governor.

Sir Cha. Aye! How came you off there, Aspin?

Asp. Oh, Sir, I brought myself off with a wet finger!—First, the governor ask'd me several questions—I generously told him the affair you had last night with the lady—confession merited mercy, and I was immediately discharged like a man of honour.

Sir Cha. Were you so, firrah? Know then, rascal, you have discover'd all my designs, and I'll this moment make an example of you—

D. Phil. Hold, Sir Charles—consider, his folly is below your resentment.

Sir Cha. I have scarce patience to suffer the dog in my sight—Rascal! deceitful villain!

Asp. Is this the return for all the dangers I have suffer'd—Well, 'tis an ungrateful age—but I am not the first man of merit that has been slighted after his faithful service.

D. Phil.

D. Phil. Come, be pacify'd, Sir Charles—all may be easily brought off again.—Here, take your letter: I have read it, and approve of the design.—But have you prepar'd any place for your appointment with the lady.

Sir Cha. No, as to that part, I believe, I must rely upon you.

D. Phil. Then I can help you at a dead lift—My apartment has a door into another street—Order her to be carry'd the back-way, and as she's a stranger to the place, she may be easily deceiv'd.

Sir Cha. I like the proposal well.—Aspin, go you this moment and conduct 'em.

Asp. So, tho' we men of merit are so barbarously us'd, we are always wanted in a case of necessity.

Sir Cha. Sirrah, no prating; mind what I say, and go out of my sight. [*Exit Aspin.*] Now which way shall I obtain my liberty for this adventure?

D. Phil. Oh, I'll gain you that freedom—and that you may the better by day-light pass unknown, I'll send you my cloak, and you shall muffle yourself in that—Ha! the governor! What means this?

Enter

Enter Lorenzo.

Lor. Don Philip, I see your friendship is not like that of the world, a meer counterfeit profession—for you endeavour to serve the person you value, tho' you see him loaded with affliction.

D. Phil. My lord, friendship is only shew'd in adversity: a man in prosperity has abundance of professors—but had he need of one, not a friend amongst 'em all.

Lor. Your friendship is mutual—Sir Charles sav'd your life, and you'd now return it with the preservation of his—so that you both are exceptions from the general rule of the world; for there's scarce a person in it, besides yourselves, can say, I have a friend.

Sir Cha. Because the reverse of friendship is the product of a degenerate age; where honesty passes for folly; perfidiousness for good policy; and all manner of knavery, for necessary wisdom to thrive in the world.—So that a man can no more be assur'd of friends in adversity, than a king or country in distress—when those that shou'd be so, enrich themselves in their destruction.

Lor. You are a young Stoic indeed, Sir Charles—However, I come now to stand your friend, for
want

want of pity, in your case, wou'd be downright cruelty—and therefore, give me leave to make some proposals that may be to your satisfaction.—Don Philip, I hope you'll excuse me a little.

D. Phil. My lord, I take my leave——Hark'e, Sir Charles, what shall I do in this affair? [*Aside.*

Sir Cha. Go, and detain the lady till I come—and d'ye hear, leave orders with the keeper for my freedom. [*Aside.*

D. Phil. Never fear—I'll manage all to the best advantage. [*Exit.*

Lor. I have this morning receiv'd advice of the cavalier's recovery, that was thought to have been kill'd—This I must yet keep as a secret, till I have brought matters to bear. [*Aside.*

Sir Cha. Now, my lord, if you please, I am ready to receive your proposals.

Lor. Sir Charles, I am come to you concerning an affair of consequence.—You must know, Alonzo, the father of Fidelia, and I, when young, were never separated from each other—Now, I understand by a letter from Madrid, you have lately depriv'd him of his daughter.

Sir Cha. How! depriv'd him of her, my lord!

Lor. Aye; but methinks I would willingly heal this breach—therefore I'd advise you to find some means,

means, by which you might reconcile yourself to him, and restore the honour of the young lady.

Sir Cha. My lord, I understand you not—'Tis true, I love Fidelia as my life; but for her honour, it is not in the least forfeited on my account.

Lor. Her father is of a quite contrary opinion.—Therefore, if you have either a value for yourself, or an affection for the young lady, you will consent to those means, that will contribute to her ease, as well as to your own security.

Sir Cha. My lord, I own the wildness of my youth.—But I have so true an affection for Fidelia, that for my security, I prize it not in comparison with her content.

Lor. I see, Sir Charles, you begin to guess at my meaning—Therefore I question not but to find you the man of honour, I was apt at first sight to believe you—Her fame upon your account is very much become the discourse of the world—therefore to reconcile all, wou'd you be willing to accept her for a wife.

Sir Cha. My lord, I needed not this preparation to embrace such welcome proposals.

Lor. Consent to that, and I'll engage your pardon shall be secur'd.

Sir Cha. My life is of as little value to me now, as when I ran the risque of forfeiting it for her—

But

But for the looser wishes that my inconstancy has been guilty of, cou'd I be so happy to see her, they wou'd immediately vanish at her sight.

Lor. Know then, Sir Charles, the lady is still in Valencia.

Sir Cha. How ! in Valencia, my lord ?

Lor. She has remain'd in confinement at my house, ever since I yesterday seiz'd her at your lodgings.

Sir Cha. Nay, then there is a mistake in this—The lady that was taken with me, I can assure you, is not Fidelia.

Lor. Her father's servant cou'd not be mistaken, and he afterwards saw her at my house.

Sir Cha. I know her face too well to be deceiv'd—The lady that was taken with me, I was a stranger to.

Lor. This is a pretty contrivance indeed !—In the first place, the young lady owns herself to be Fidelia, but at the same time denies a correspondence with you—and now you own a correspondence with her, but deny she is the person—Who was it then that you had an assignation with last night at my house ?

Sir Cha. Since you have made a discovery in that affair, 'twas with the lady that was seiz'd with me.

Lor.

Lor. And that lady, you positively say, is not Fidelia?

Sir Cha. I do, my lord, and if I am in my senses, I am sure I can affirm it.

Lor. Now she actually says she is—but denies that she has either seen you, or had any discourse with you in Valencia.

Sir Cha. Nay, then there is a farther mystery in this!—I am certain, the lady I met last night was not Fidelia.—Now if the person you mean, that denies all this, shou'd prove to be her, then your lordship is mistaken, for she can't be the same that was seiz'd with me.

Lor. Nay, there has been no art magic to transform her, nor to change one person to another.—Therefore depend on't, she's the same—Now the messenger from her father went away satisfy'd she was the right; and she, upon examination, own'd herself to be so.

Sir Cha. This makes it all seem more intricate still.

Lor. Come with me, and let your sight convince you.

Sir Cha. By this he'll discover the lady is gone abroad, in order to meet me.—What can I do? I must submit.

[*Aside.*

Lor.

Lor. Come along then, Sir Charles—methinks I am impatient to have this riddle explain'd.

Sir Cha. And I the like, my lord—for I am sure, as the story lies now, there is so great a mystery in it, 'tis beyond the power of a churchman to unfold it, till we see farther. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E, *Don Philip's apartment in
the governor's house.*

Enter Aspin, Fidelia, and Leonora VEIL'D.

Asp. So, this is the first time that ever I turn'd gentleman-usher—Methinks I make a notable figure in my preferment—Nay, I don't know, but I may rise to be a great man. [*Aside.*]

Leo. The creature looks as if he was in love with himself—Hark'e, fellow, where have you brought us?

Asp. Not a jot from your own inclination, I suppose—Look'e, Madam, it is master's business to answer your questions—Here my service is at end—Methinks, I begin to have a jantee air already—I'll see how I can compliment [*Aside*].—Ladies, I am your most humble servant, and so I take my leave of such illustrious beauties. [*Exit.*]

Fide. I never saw such a coxcomb in my life!

Leo.

Leo. Now we may venture to UNVEIL—for I know not where we are, by reason I never look'd out of the chair.

Fide. Perhaps Sir Charles may have provided us one of his mistress's apartments—for I know not what to think of him, now he's grown so inconstant.

Leo. Sure I'm no stranger to this place, *Fidelia*.

Fide. They seem to be handsome lodgings, and methinks are very prettily furnish'd.

Leo. Ha! I am surpriz'd!

Fide. At what, Madam?

Leo. As I live, we are betray'd!

Fide. How! heaven forbid!

Leo. We are in my father's house, and this is Don Philip's apartment!

Fide. If so, here's treachery indeed! What shall we do?

Leo. Nay, now here's a more convincing proof; this is the very door that opens into one of my rooms!

Fide. Then, Madam, our resolution must be quick as our thought; for they'll certainly be here presently.

Leo. Oh, for a stratagem now to outwit 'em—Stay, I'll look thro' the key-hole, and see if I can discern my servant.

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G

Fide.

Fide. Is there any body to be seen?

Leo. Yes, there's Flora working with her needle at the window.

Fide. Call softly, Madam; perhaps she may hear you.

Leo. Flora, hift, Flora!—Don't you hear?

Flo. Who calls?

[*Within.*

Leo. 'Tis I—Fetch the key that belongs to the door, and open it.

Flo. It lies, Madam, on your father's table—I'll run and fetch it immediately.

Leo. Now we shall succeed, and every thing will be right again.

Fide. Madam, 'tis all too late—somebody's coming up.

Leo. Ha! 'Tis Don Philip! Assist me wit now, or never—Keep close your VEIL, Madam.

Enter Don Philip.

D. Phil. What do I see, Leonora here!

Leo. Seeing this lady in your apartment, Sir, I came to keep her company till you cou'd come according to your assignation.

D. Phil. Say rather, Madam, that you came to meet Sir Charles Winlove—that this lady is the confederate of your falshood, and that you have mistaken this apartment for another.

Leo.

Leo. How, Don Philip! I never saw such assurance in my life!

D. Phil. Madam, I find my suspicions are not so groundless as I just now believ'd 'em to be—But you shall see my good-nature is not to be impos'd upon.

Leo. So! this is excellently fine indeed!—first, to bring strange ladies to my father's house, and then to turn the fault upon me.

D. Phil. Why, Madam, can you deny that this lady came here with you?

Leo. Yes, Sir, I can—You know, that she did not.

D. Phil. Nor did not you come here to meet the English cavalier?

Leo. I won't satisfy you, Sir.

Fide. Sir, what have you done? I expected Sir Charles here; and instead of that, you are come and have incens'd the governour's daughter to my ruin.

D. Phil. Ha! then I have been too rash indeed!—I find now, that this is the lady I look'd for, and jealousy has brought Leonora hither. [*Aside.*]

Leo. So, his countenance tells me, he begins to soften to my wish—I see her stratagem has took. [*Aside.*]

D. Phil. What shall I say to her? [*Aside.*]
Madam, I find already I have been in an error in my suspicions, but not in being false myself.

Leo. So! now you see your assurance won't take, you'd endeavour to conceal your falsehood.

D. Phil. Madam, I can immediately clear myself of that—for to satisfy you who this lady is—

Leo. Oh, Sir, I am not so passionately in love, as to desire satisfaction.

Enter Flora through the other door.

Flo. Madam, I cou'd not find the key before, or —

Leo. Hift, Flora; no more!

Flo. I find I shall do mischief if I talk.—
Madam, your father's coming with another cavalier.

D. Phil. Prithee, Leonora, hear me justify myself.

Leo. No, I'll relate it all to my lord, and as I never lov'd you, shall be glad of this opportunity to be rid of you—Excellently come off! [*Aside.*

Enter Lorenzo, Sir Charles, and Aspin.

Lor. Ha! what's the matter daughter?

Leo. My father and the English cavalier! I am certainly betray'd again.

[*Aside.*

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. His daughter! I am strangely deceiv'd then—for I am sure this is the lady that was taken with me. [*Aside.*]

Lor. Speak, Leonora.

Leo. Your lordship should ask that gentleman, who makes private assignations, and brings strange ladies to your house.

Lor. How, Don Philip!

D. Phil. Pardon me, Sir Charles, for impeaching you—But egad, all must out—This lady is the captive, and came here to see my friend, who was to have met her by stealth.

Sir Cha. That lady the captive!—Now wou'd they, tho' I see her in my presence, persuade me I am blind, and change her to another person.

Lor. Sir Charles, you seem still to remain in the dark—Pray, Madam, UNVEIL—Now is it Fidelia or no?

Sir Cha. Ha! I am thunder-struck!—Sure 'tis the fond error of my eyes!

Lor. What say you now, Sir Charles?

Sir Cha. And yet, methinks, I cannot be deceiv'd—Is it my Fidelia then?

Fide. Oh, Sir Charles!

Sir Cha. It is, it is!—The music of her voice informs me now 'tis she!—Oh, my Fidelia! let

me fly with joy into thy arms, and breathe my soul upon thy lips.

Fide. Long have I wish'd, Sir Charles, for such a happy meeting! — but past misfortunes wou'd be an unwelcome theme — your love will recompense 'em — Be constant for the future, and 'tis all I ask.

Sir Cha. No chance, but death, shall ever part us more! — Sure I am lost in transport and surprize! — Oh, my Fidelia! methinks I cou'd repeat thy name, till distant waters catch the charming echo, and when they rowl high in their mountain-waves, resound it to the skies!

D. Phil. Nay, amongst all your adventures I think I never saw you in such raptures before.

Sir Cha. Pardon me, friends, if all my senses are o'ercome with joy and admiration!

Lor. This is pleasant indeed! Sir Charles—that you shou'd contrive to see the lady, and yet not know she was here before.

Fide. My lord, Sir Charles is a cavalier for the ladies—and such ever esteem secrecy as a point of honour:—therefore, you must excuse him for his reasons.

Sir Cha. Ha! now I begin to understand this mystery!—Fidelia has given me a hint of my inconstancy—

constancy—but I must conceal my affairs with the other lady from the company. [*Aside.*]

Lor. Is the riddle explain'd to your satisfaction, Sir Charles?

Sir Cha. It is, my lord.

Leo. So, I see he has taken the hint—Well, tho' I have lost my lover, I shall preserve my honour, that's one comfort. [*Aside.*]

Asp. Now, I believe by the joy of my master, and the humour of this company, that all is like to go well:—if so, 'tis the first good accident that ever I knew a woman the occasion of. [*Aside.*]

Lor. Now, to add to the pleasures you receive—know, I have this morning had notice from Madrid, that the cavalier who was thought to have been kill'd, is perfectly recover'd of his wounds.

Sir Cha. This is happy indeed!—for methinks, my Fidelity, I would not have the stain of blood sully my character, nor a melancholy thought amidst the joys of love.

Lor. Sir Charles, you must grant me the favour of solemnizing your marriage at my house, with these that are to be coupled also.

D. Phil. Shall I then, Madam, have the happiness of a reconciliation at last?

Leo. Aye, Don Philip—for as this affair has been carry'd on by quarrels, I think it may naturally end in marriage.

Fide. Now there is nothing wanting, to compleat our blessing, but a reconciliation with my father.

Lor. That, Madam, I hope is in my power to gain you ; for know, that the lord Alonzo is now in my house.

Fide. What ! in Valencia, my lord ?

Lor. Yes, Madam—but here he comes !—retire at a distance, and you shall see me break this affair to him.—

[The company retire to the back-part of the stage.]

Enter Alonzo.

Lor. So, my lord ! I have seen Sir Charles Winlove, according to my promise.

Alon. Well, and what does he say ? How does he behave himself ?

Lor. As I expected, my lord.

Alon. As you expected ! Humph ! that is, I suppose, you have told him the news of the cavalier's recovery ; and now he very peremptorily bids defiance, and intends to march off with my daughter.

Lor. Still you won't comprehend me.

Alon. Lord, I tell you, I do comprehend you ! Don't I know that he is a very bloody-minded fellow ? Has he not stole away my daughter, and for ought I know rifled her of all ?—and this I can't comprehend, forsooth !

Lor. You won't hear me——

Alon. Nay, I tell you, I do hear you—but I'll not be so impos'd upon I am resolv'd—A pen and ink there ! Since the law won't do me justice, I'll write the dog a challenge, and you shall be the bearer.

Lor. A very pretty office for a magistrate indeed ! but suppose he shou'd submit to your own terms ?

Alon. Why let him—My terms are sword and pistol, tell him so !—Odd, tho' I am an old fellow, I can still take a breathing upon occasion. ,

Lor. Nay, since I can't satisfy you myself, I have another card to play.—Come forward there.

[*The company approach, Sir Charles Winlove and Fidelia kneel.*]

Now will you be brought to reason ?

Alon. Ha ! what's the meaning of all this ?

Lor. Speak to him, Madam.

Fide. My lord ! confider I am your daughter, and forgive my weakness.

Alon. Humph !

Sir Cha.

Sir Cha. My lord, we only want your blessing to compleat our happiness !

Alon. My blessing !—Why, I was talking of cutting your throat you dog :—and now instead of tilting, you ask me for my blessing.

Lor. Sir Charles has had an honourable affection for your daughter ; and he only wants your consent to make her his wife.

Alon. Make her his wife, say you !—Is he in earnest ?

Sir Cha. My lord, I am.

Alon. Nay then, take her with all my heart—Rise, daughter, I forgive you, and heaven bless you both.

Lor. Now, 'tis as it shou'd be.

Alon. Aye, and so it is—Since he makes her his wife, I am very well satisfied !—Buss me daughter, and you too Sir Charles —and now we are all friends again.—But I did intend to send you a challenge, faith—however, instead of pushing at me in a duel, turn your weapon upon my daughter, and make me a grand-father—d'ye hear ?

Lor. Why, that's well said !—But won't you take notice of the rest of the company ?

Alon. Aye, with all my heart—Who are they ?

Lor.

Lor. This is my daughter, and this my son-in-law that is to be.

Alon. Is this your daughter?—Faith, she's very pretty!—Madam, by your leave [*Salutes her*].—Well, since we are all reconcil'd, old friend, let's have an entertainment suitable to this occasion.

[*A dance, after which they come forward.*]

Sir Cha. [*To the governor.*] My lord, I thank you for the favours that I here receive.—And now, my Fidelity, I begin to be satisfy'd, that true happiness only consists in a retirement from the follies of the world.—And your conduct has so far converted me from a loose opinion of your sex, that I shall ever think

No joys on earth can with chaste love compare,
And, beyond riches, prize a virtuous fair.

EPILOGUE

E P I L O G U E

SPOKEN BY MISS LINDAR.

WELL! as I'm champion for young Bayes's play,
Take care, good people, of the words you say!
For If I like 'em not, I shall abuse you!
And were I big enough—I wou'd so use you!
What have I said? You laugh at my behaviour,
And think me yet too young to ask a favour.
Faith now I'm cool again, I think so too!
What did our author then intend to do?
I must confess, I'm angry at th' abuse—
To send me here, to make his play's excuse!
Why, what a piece of folly has he shown?
He shou'd consider I'm not yet full grown!
If I had reach'd my teens, or something nigh,
I shou'd have been well pleas'd my strength to try!
Howe'er gallants, I yet believe—a kiss
Might bribe the boldest—surely none wou'd hiss!
Nay, as it is, you each must stand my friend,
If youth's a fault, I ev'ry day shall mend;
For here you know, like gard'ner's forc'd endeavours,
We sprout apace! and soon may grant you favours—
And when I'm ripe, I find it in my nature
To be a very easy loving creature!

I wou'd do much to gain your future graces—
Come! let me see a smile upon your faces!
If you once think to put on frowns to fright me,
I'll be reveng'd, and die a maid to spite ye.

[Runs off.]



SIR

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

A

T R A G E D Y.

ACTED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL IN
DRURY-LANE,

I N T H E Y E A R 1724,

BY HIS MAJESTY'S SERVANTS.

Obsequium amicos, veritas odium, parit!

TERENT.

O fœlix hominum genus!

Si vestros animos amor,

Quo cœlum regitur, regat.

U. S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

REPORT OF THE

SER THOMAS OVERBURY

THE AGRICULTURAL
THEATRE ROYAL IN
THE CITY OF LONDON

BY HIS MAJESTY'S
COMMISSIONERS OF THE
LANDS REVENUE



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THE AGRICULTURAL
THEATRE ROYAL IN
THE CITY OF LONDON

T O
HERBERT TRYST, ESQ.
OF THE
CITY OF HEREFORD.

S I R,

I HAVE been told, 'tis a custom to ask permission for such kind of addressees; but there is something so very mean in this civility, to ask your pardon for neglecting it, were to deserve your indignation.

If merit ought to be preferred to what the world calls greatness; if a sense of past favours should be considered, before future views; you, Sir, have the justest title to this Dedication from me,
were

DEDICATION.

were the play a performance more worthy
your acceptance.

Had other authors the knowledge and
experience of your virtues that I have,
I should find many rivals, when I beg
leave to subscribe myself,

S I R,

Your devoted,

Humble servant,

RICHARD SAVAGE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE importunity of the Publisher being very pressing, I omit the Preface, which I intended; wherein I proposed, by way of Essay, A DISCOURSE ON TRAGEDY: the subject being too copious to treat of, in this short time, I defer it, either to publish it single, or to join it with some other work.

But my gratitude prompts me to declare the obligations I have to my best and dearest friend, Mr. Aaron Hill, for his many judicious corrections in this Tragedy. On that worthy gentleman, whose mind is enriched with every noble science, and in whose breast all the virtues of humanity are comprised, it will be my pride, to offer my sentiments in a more distinguishing manner hereafter.

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I think

ADVERTISEMENT.

I think it my duty also, to return thanks to the town, for their favourable reception of this play ; and for the applause their indulgence bestow'd on the performance of the young actors : particularly, for my own success, in a double capacity, as actor and author, I shall ever publicly confess their generosity, as it will ever prove my secret satisfaction.

Notwithstanding the disadvantage this play may have received in the representation, I cannot omit acknowledging a debt of gratitude to Mr. Theophilus Cibber, who was very careful in the management of the rehearsals, and endeavoured to instruct every one concerned in the play ; a mechanisn, which my inexperience, as an actor, made me incapable of.

Though an author knows the meaning of his scenes, he may be unacquainted with a theatrical method of setting them in the most advantageous appearance. Example enforces precept :

ADVERTISEMENT.

precept : and therefore, Mr. Cibber, junior, took the noblest method to improve others, by doing justice to his own character ; and, though he labours under the present disadvantage of small stature, I cannot help concurring with the opinion of many others, that in action and elocution, he is certainly a prodigy !

P R O L O G U E

WRITTEN BY AARON HILL, ESQ.

SPOKEN BY MR. CIBBER, JUN.

NEW to the stage—by no past praises fir'd !
Young, and unfam'd, and but by hope inspir'd :
Raife us to reach that hope's ambitious call,
Or with soft pity, break our threaten'd fall.
Small tho' our merit be, your minds are great,
And undeserv'd applause may worth create :
Sweetness fits smiling, where the heart beats true,
And they praise most, to whom most praise is due.

Low let me court ye to befriend our cause !
If justice pleads not, generous pity draws.
In a full world, our author lives, alone
Unhappy !—and, of consequence, unknown :
Yet, amidst sorrow, he disdains complaint ;
Nor languid, in the race of life, grows faint.
He swims, unyielding, against fortune's stream,
Nor to his private suff'rings, stoops his theme :
Adopts the pains which others undergo,
And, for your pleasure, feels not his own woe.

They shou'd themselves be pleas'd, who love to
 please ;
And he who fears not mis'ry, merits ease.
Oh !—save unfriended virtue from distress—
'Tis the divine prerogative—to bless !

Sad,

P R O L O G U E.

Sad, for the tragic scene, your hearts prepare,
Where love kills friendship, and awakes despair;
Where cherish'd mischiefs tow'r above controul,
And warring passions rend the tortur'd soul!

Taught by the pictur'd woes, which weep to-night,
Let long-weigh'd caution guide your wishes right:
Slow, thro' your eyes, give smiling ruin way;
Love, by that pass, but enters to betray!
Beauty fades fast—nor will it's transient grace
Sooth the sick bosom, when the thought takes place.

But when twin souls each other's transport claim,
And pant and burn, and twist their struggling flame,
Safe let 'em meet, by no false fears oppress'd;
Form'd to be one, and, till rejoin'd, unblest'd!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

Earl of Northampton,	Mr. Bridgwater.
Earl of Somerset,	Mr. Cibber, jun.
Sir Thomas Overbury,	Mr. Savage, the author.
Sir Gervas Elloways,	Mr. Keith,

W O M E N.

Lady Frances Howard, niece to the Earl of Northampton, formerly wife of the Earl of Essex, di- vorced from him, and afterwards married to the Earl of Somerset,	Mrs. Campbell.
---	----------------

Isabella, an orphan, under the guardianship of the Earl of Somerset, in love with Sir Thomas Overbury,	Mrs. Bret.
---	------------

Cleora, confidant to the Coun- tess of Somerset, secretly a friend to Isabella,	Mrs. Davison.
---	---------------

Officer, guards, and attendants.

SCENE LONDON.

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Earl of Northampton and Sir Gervas Elloways.

Nor. **H**OW cheerfully hath this day's light
broke forth!

The new risen sun, drest rich in orient beams,
Beholds, with triumph, the late wife of Essex
Transplant her beauties, from his barren shade,
To flourish by the heat of love and Somerset.

Ell. Never shall I forget the tempting bride!
Such dazzling lustre sparkled from her eyes,
That the proud gems she wore shone dim beneath 'em;
Inviting warmth glow'd lovely on her cheeks,
And from her tongue flow'd such melodious sounds,
That list'ning rage grew gentle as her accents,
And age was youth again by looking on her!

Nor. Yet, tho' her features are as soft as air,
Strong passions urge her mind to manly daring!
Work'd up by nature with unusual strength,
Vengeance, ambition, and the warmth of greatness
Swell in her soul, and lift her above woman.

Ell. That Overbury, who oppos'd this marriage,
Will frown on its conclusion—He's your enemy!

When corresponding with the court of Rome,
'Twas he who intercepted dangerous letters.

Nor. He did, nor think that I forget he did it:
My genius, baleful as a comet's blaze,
Hangs o'er his head, and burns with red revenge!
Nay, he's my rival too!—That fiery thought
Glows in my breast; and as I weigh my wrongs,
I swell like *Ætna*, when her sulph'rous rage
Bursts o'er the earth, and rolls in floods of fire.

Ell. Your *Isabella*, *Somerfet's* fair charge,
Is sure an abstract of divine perfection!
While *Overbury's* love, like a black cloud,
Cuts off, and intercepts the glittering prospect.

Nor. O! name it not—it must not, shall not be!
Old as I am, I'll snatch the pleasure from him;
And love and policy shall join to crush him.

Ell. You know her charms are *Somerfet's* disposal.
Warm in the lustre of our late *Queen's* graces,
'Tis strange, to mark the power of time to change us.
Her father shone the favourite of the court:
But when his day of hope at length declin'd,
Drove by his enemies he fled to Scotland,
Pin'd there, and, chill'd with sorrows, died an exile.

Nor. 'Tis well—but I have news more worth
relating!

Wade, the lieutenant of the Tower's displac'd.

Ell.

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 121

Ell. May I remind your lordship of a promise?

Nor. Thou needst not, *Ell*'ways, I so truly prize thee,

That were my mind big with my country's fate,
With plots, which known, would blast my life and honour,

I shou'd, I think, unfold 'em to thy friendship—
Of that hereafter—See, the bride approaches!

[*Exit Ell.*]

Enter the Countess of Somerset.

Nor. Hail, to those charms! that smile upon the morn,

And sweetly gild it, like a milder sun!

May joys, in circles, dance away your days!

And length of years sustain your bridal pleasures!

Fair Somerset! now happy too, and great!

Blest with perfection to the height of thought!

The worth that could deserve beauty like your's,

Infuses soft bliss, and heaps long life with pleasure.

Count. Thus—while a lover, talk'd my Somerset,

His words fell soft like hov'ring flakes of snow,

And in cold tremblings melted on my bosom!

But now, alas!—

Nor. You cannot, sure, suspect him!

Count. He has alarm'd

A pride

A pride that catches the first spark, and kindles !
 To be forsaken, is a thought of horror !
 Oh ! it wou'd grate the woman in my soul,
 To have my pride subdu'd and make me mad !
 Tho' but last night our nuptials fix'd him mine !
 Starting this morning from my flighted arms,
 Thought seem'd to press his mind, sighs heav'd his
 bosom,

And, as repenting of his wish possess'd,
 Full in the blushing dawn, he rose and left me.

Nor. There is a damp, I know, that clouds his joys,
 A vapour, which your warmth might soon disperse.

Count. What points my uncle at ?

Nor. I'll speak it plainly——

Overbury ! ——

That restless foe of ours—your husband's friend !
 This morning is expected.

Count. Overbury !

Then aid me indignation—rage—and vengeance !

Nor. Wisely, you call on rage for its assistance ;
 Justice would be too slow for your revenge,
 And conscience bids us give it up for ever !
 But what is conscience ?—a thin empty name,
 That terrifies, like ghosts, by fancy rais'd.
 Ev'n the most brave use stratagems in war ;
 And what are plots against a private foe,
 But self-defence ?—the first great rule of nature !

Count

Count. My lord, I see to what your counsel leads me!
 I am a woman! nay, a woman wrong'd!
 And when our sex, from injuries take fire,
 Our softness turns to fury!—and our thoughts
 Breathe vengeance and destruction!

Nor. Spoke like yourself!

Count. Oh! I'm transported with inspiring heat!
 You know I never lov'd the Earl of Somerset,
 'Twas interest, 'twas ambition won me to him;
 And there's one thought, I own, has rack'd my peace,
 The only one I e'er conceal'd from you.

Nor. Instruct me—It may serve us as a plan,
 From which I'll raise a pile of tow'ring mischief,
 Shall nod with watchful horror o'er his head,
 'Till, tumbling, it shall crush him into ruin.

Count. Know then, with shame I speak it, I have
 lov'd him!

Nor. Lov'd whom?—not Overbury!

Count. Yes! lov'd him, more than I detest him now!
 Each thought, look, gesture has confess'd the folly!
 Nay, I have wrote—O heav'n! I know not what!
 Reason was fled!—and every thought was madness!
 And now he may betray me!

Nor. May! he will —

These letters must be artfully won from him:
 Succeeding, we stir Somerset against him;

124 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Revenge, with transport then, would sweeten all
The rage of slighted love—urge that discreetly :
I know the temper of your lord—'twill fire him!—
Touch but that point, and jealousy pleads for you—
But mark ! he comes, and seems amus'd and pensive :
'Tis fit we part,—anon we'll fix our scheme.

[*Exit Count.*]

Enter Earl of Somerset.

Som. A kind good-morrow to my honour'd uncle !
Now fortune seems to smile in earnest on me ;
This last night's blessing crown'd my warmest wish,
And kindling fancy from the thought takes fire !
Oh ! my good lord ! language gives way beneath it,
The painter's colours, and the poet's art
Cou'd touch but a faint image of my joys.

Nor. And yet, if I mistook you not, at entrance,
Your looks were low'ring, and your bosom labour'd !
Thro' the gay smile of your dissembled joy,
I saw th' obscuring shade which wrap'd your soul.

Som. Sure, you mistook !—I think I was all
rapture !

How I adore your niece—be witness, heaven !
Witness ye soft desires ! that swell my veins,
And beat but to the music of her love——
Dearly I love her ! to distraction love her !

Nor

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 125

Nor words can speak — nor thought can feel my
passion !

But—Oh ! Northampton !

Nor. Speak.

Som. I have a friend

Dearer than life ! and, as my honour, precious !

Our wishes and our interests are the same !

Friendship has join'd us in so strict a band,

As if one parcel'd soul inform'd us both !

Yet he ———

Nor. Let not his partial hate of her perplex you !

A wife becomes the truest, tend'rest friend,

The balm of comfort, and the source of joy !

Thro' every various turn of life the same.

For men, they are not as they were of old—

Oft their professions are the arts of interest !

You'll find the friendship of the world is show,

Mere outward show ! 'Tis like the harlot's tears,

The statesman's promise, or false patriot's zeal,

Full of fair-seeming, but delusion all.

Som. Not so—then might I think you not my
friend !

Shall I, because I live in faithless times,

Distrust a virtuous man ? or shou'd I slight

A faithful fair-one, 'cause her sex are false ?

If these are maxims, ties can bind no more !

All

126 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

All that is human is for ever lost,
And brutes are e'en as we are.

Nor. Come, my lord!

This Overbury! he's the thorn that galls you!
Trust me, I know him well — he has a soul
Too harshly form'd for such endearing friendship.

Som. Greatly you wrong him! I have found him
tender

As first-made mothers to their erring infants.
Firm to his prince, and faithful to his country;
A braver subject England never boasted,
Nor man a nobler friend than Overbury.

Nor. Can he be justly call'd your noblest friend,
Yet sacrifice your bliss to private malice?
Let not a show of friendship make you wretched,
Nor break the bands which heaven and love have made.

Som. Know you, my lord, so little then of So-
merfet,

That you can wrong him with so poor a thought?
My wife! to tell you but how much I love her!
'Twou'd, like eternity, admit no end.

Nor. I've done — your safe discretion be your
guide. [Exit.

Som. A wife! a friend! Oh! they include all joys!
And love and friendship are so near a-kin,
They shou'd, like poetry and music, join!

Each

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 127

Each form'd to grace the other—Why, then, in me,
Why, in my breast, shou'd friendship jar with love?

Enter Sir Thomas Overbury.

Som. Fly to my arms—Welcome as ease to pain,
As health to nature, or relief to want!

Over. O Somerset! engraft me on thy bosom!
Each day of absence seem'd a ling'ring age!
But I have hasten'd e'en to out-strip time!
Left the dull hours behind me as I flew,
And reach'd the goal of all my wishes here.

Som. Friends, who thus meet, possess so soft a bliss,
That none, but those who taste, can guess our joy.

Over. May ours live to the last verge of being!
Nay, ev'n in death! for then, if thought remains,
Shou'd mine but meet a soul in worlds to come,
Whose generous flame sublim'd it from the rest,
I shou'd be apt to call it—Somerset!

But tell me—for my mind has dwelt upon thee,
Has thy fond heart regain'd its liberty?
Does the late Essex yet appear herself?

Or art thou still bewitch'd with her enchantment?

Som. Alas! thou know'st not what a lover feels.

Over. Have I a soul for friendship, not for love?

There's

128 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

There's one who knows my softness but too well!
Knows how her beauty fires! her virtue charms me!
Essex, I see, still hangs her witchcraft round thee.

Som. Wou'dst thou but view her with impartial eyes!

Over. Why, I confess she's fair; and when she talks,
Inchanting softness melts upon her tongue,
And flows in seas of mischief!—She has beauty,
Which spreads and blooms like a fresh-opening flow'r!
But poisonous adders lurk beneath its stalk:
And from such briars shoots this lovely rose,
It wounds the touch which it invites to crop it.

Som. But let me beg thee, if thou lov'st thy Somerset,
If friendship makes my peace of mind thy care,
No more to shock me on this tender point.

Over. 'Twere flattery all, not friendship, to comply!
The wound can ne'er be cur'd that shuns the probing!
Kind is the hand that wipes the dust from virtue,
And counsel is a friend's peculiar office.

Som. Trust me, my friend, that counsel comes
too late.

Over. Hear me!—for, as I love thee, I will speak!
What tho' her outward charms attract the eye,
Virtue, the gem within, is long since faded!
Her fame, like flesh that blackens in the sun,
Is blown and bloated by the breath of thousands,

Now,

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 129

Now, as a man, weigh well ere you resolve,
For when a woman's reputation's gone,
All that repenting virtue can inspire,
Can never fix it in its state again.

Som. Cruel report, I know, has wrong'd her worth!
Envy still feeds upon the fairest fruit,
And spreads its poison on the wings of virtue;
It blinds ev'n Overbury to accuse her.

Over. My lord, my lord, I am no stranger to her!
Her trial with her late wrong'd husband, Essex!
Her loose pretensions for that wish'd divorce!
I know it all!—and, by my soul, I think,
Dear, as I love thee, could'st thou stoop so low
As to receive that wanton to thy arms,
'Twould shake my friendship so—I could not scorn
thee—

But ere I'd see thy shame—I'd range the world,
And leave thee to the ruin thou'rt so fond of!
Should'st thou!—Alas! what mean those starting tears,
Big drops of sweat—dead paleness—trembling limbs!
Signs of some strong confusion!

Som. O my friend!
I must not—cannot hide a thought from thee!
She, from whose charms your friendship wou'd dis-
suade me,
Is now my wife!

VOL. I.

I

Over.

130 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Over. Your wife ?

Som. My much lov'd wife.

Over. Oh ! what are men who love !—My lord,
I've done !

One sigh to friendship only—and no more !
All those convulsive starts that shock thy frame,
Were the prophetic warners of my fall.

Som. Said'st thou thy fall ! fall first a thousand
Somersets.

Over. That I still love thee—witness this embrace !
Witness these tears !—but from this fatal hour,
Join'd, as you are to her—we part for ever.

Som. O stop—repent—recall those hasty words !
What ! part for ever !

Over. For ever our alliance, not our love.

Som. I fear I have no friend—but Overbury.

Over. You have a wife, and friendship is her office !
It stings my soul to see thee thus betray'd,
And my foreboding heart e'en bleeds with pity !
All that is left me now is to avoid thee,
And not to see, what but to hear will kill me.
Farewel, my lord—may ceaseless blessings wait you.

[*Exit.*

Somerfet alone.

Som. Sorrow, eternal sorrow claims me now !
All happy fortune flies for ever from me !

Whate'er's

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 131

Whate'er's worth wishing for on earth, I've lost.
Life is a dream, disturb'd by constant cares,
And he, who is not lov'd, finds death a blessing.

Friendship's dear ties for generous souls were made,
When they relax, black woes our peace invade !
Friendship from every ill can life defend,
Our guardian angel's but a faithful friend. [*Exit.*]

ACT II. SCENE I. CONTINUES.

Isabella, Cleora.

Cleo. **W**HY, Isabella, are these sighs of sorrow,
While crouding joys invite your blooming youth ?
Love rears a thousand little tender fears,
Fate, with a smile auspicious, bids you hope ;
To fear is to distrust a power supreme,
The watchful guard of virtue in distress.

Isa. Have I not cause to fear a thousand ills ?

Cleo. No ! your lov'd Overbury comes to cheer you,
Then let weak malice work up threatening mischief,
Soon shall the fairy structure melt away :
Tho' Somerset's new bride tries every wile
That slighted love, to hatred turn'd, can practise,
Her soul's chief secrets she unfolds to me,

132 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

As I to you disclose 'em.

Ifa. Kind Cleora !

Our friendship grew and ripen'd with our years !
When forc'd to lose thee at my father's death,
How mournful was our parting. I blest'd the chance,
When I beheld thee, with my guardian's bride,
Companion of her hours.

Cleo. Of me no more :

Now let your Overbury fill your thoughts,
And every accent swell with sounds of love.

Ifa. Oh ! my Cleora ! he will ne'er be mine ;
A dreadful dream, last night, has warn'd my soul :
Love had, methought, ordain'd our nuptial rites ;
But sudden, while before the priest we stood,
A low'ring cloud hung o'er the temple's roof,
And, with slow horror, spread a fleecy darkness.
From its black center burst a rattling shower,
Th' lab'ring air groan'd big with rolling thunder,
Red, thro' the gather'd gloom, flash'd lightnings broke,
And the rent veil let in a dreadful glare,
Which, with portentous quiverings, gleam'd upon us !
The altar totter'd—and the lights grew dim—
A hollow wind sigh'd cold—and from their graves
Pale ghosts stalk'd shadowy, and scream'd hideous
round me.

But oh !—around my love fierce brightness glitter'd,
A fire,

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 133

A fire, triumphant, curl'd about his form,
And, winding upward, snatch'd him from my sight.

Cleo. Yet he's not lost—See! where he smiling
comes!

Let me not stay to interrupt your joys. [Exit.

Enter Overbury.

Over. O take me, take me, to thy heav'nly bosom!
Here let me pour out all my hoarded thoughts!
Here tower my joys! my cares be here dispers'd!

Isa. I have a thousand tender things to say!
A thousand doubts at once to be resolv'd!
Three tedious months have heavily roll'd on,
And not one thought, perhaps has chid thy stay:
But while thy voice so sweetly strikes my ear,
My joys revive, and melt away my sadness.

Over. Let my soul bless the music of those words!
My heart breaks rapt'rous at the softning sound!
I feast my famish'd eyes upon thy smiles!
I touch thee—and am lost in extasy!
A tide of thrilling joys flows thro' my veins,
I pant with pleasure, and I burn with love.

Isa. I cannot, if I wou'd disguise my thoughts,
'Tho, 'tis perhaps, a fault to look thus kindly:
But, oh! beware! for thou hast dangerous foes!
Beware, Northampton, who pretends to love me!

134 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Beware the woman who deludes thy friend !
 Watchful, I strive to counterplot their mischief,
 And guard thy virtue from impending danger !

Over. Oh ! thou rich source of everlasting pleasure !
 Virtues rise mix'd, and sparkle in thy soul :
 One glittering charm pursues another's shine,
 As while I cut those seas which brought me near thee,
 Sweet sun-reflecting waves roll'd glassy on ;
 And this no sooner kiss'd the shore, and dy'd,
 But a new follower rose, and swell'd as lovely.

Enter Northampton.

Nor. Why start you, Madam, — at a lover's
 presence ?

Unveil your clouded beauty—since, this morning,
 A smiling son looks gay on our friend's nuptials.

Isa. My lord, I want the courtier.

Nor. Not the woman !

I see a too-successful rival near you——

Sir, I shou'd speak you welcome—You are happy—
 But, Madam, since your charms may be neglected,
 For boys, unskill'd, find gems, whose worth they
 know not !

When such your fortune proves, think of Nor-
 thampton,

And smile, tho' late, on one who lives to love you.

Over.

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 135

Over. My lord, this injury but provokes my scorn,
The next may move my anger.

Nor. Am I threaten'd?

Away—thou buzzing insect of the court!

Ove. Reproaches are too mean for brave mens anger,
Or I could sting thy arrogance with talking!
Be wise! nor urge my sword against thy meanness,
Worn for a nobler quarrel.

Nor. Sir, 'tis well!

When we meet next, what now remains to say,
May be debated.

Over. At your speediest leisure. [*Leads off Isab.*]

Northampton *solus.*

Nor. Well, Overbury,—thou dost right to spurn me!
If plots have power, if oaths have force to crush thee,
If there's a magic spell beneath the moon,
Or poison can be drawn from baneful plants,
Then horror, from my fury, light upon thee!

Enter Countess of Somerset.

Count. My lord, I know not if I'm yet betray'd!
My foe shot by me with a gloomy brow,
Nor bow'd his head in passing.

I 4

Nor.

136 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Nor. Saw you your lord?

Count. I did; and strangely mov'd!
The usual sweetness of his nature's lost,
With folded arms he traverses the room,
Now red!—now pale! big on his wat'ry eyes
Prompt tears stand trembling—speak to him, and he
 sighs!

Or shakes his head—and groans an hollow answer!
Then, on a sudden, starts!—and flies observance!

Nor. Now is the time to fire him to our purpose!
Their friendship broke, I have a further plot—
Ere night this Overbury sees the Tower.

Count. Wolsey nor Burleigh ne'er projected better.

Nor. Haste we to execute resolves of weight.
An active fire shou'd quicken vast conceptions!
For, when delay's cold influence chills our schemes,
Some adverse fate comes, like a furious blast,
And kills 'em ere they ripen into action.

Count. O! I can match thee with an equal flame,
Not e'en the soldier's fury, rais'd in war!
The rage of tyrants when defiance stings 'em!
The pride of priests so bloody when in power!
Are half so dreadful as a woman's vengeance.

Nor. 'Tis a warm thought, and fires the mount-
 ing soul!
Revenge dares strike at every thing—
Rivers of blood mark out her smoking way!

And

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 137

And kingdoms flame to give her triumphs lustre !
Welcome, dread vengeance !

Count. Let the priest-ridden vulgar worship virtue !
Thou, virtuous Overbury, sleep, and dream !
Dream of philosophy, and puzzling honour !
Of heavenly visions, and immortal shadows !
Till slow revenge leaps suddenly upon thee :
Then start !—behold who strikes ! and so expire !

Nor. Soft ! the earl comes !—be on the nicest guard !
Prove thy success but vast as are thy wishes,
Thy name shall swell on fame's immortal voice,
A wonder among women ! [*Exit.*

Count. He comes !—now aid me, all my sex's falsehood !

Enter Somerset musing.

Som. They say, our thoughts distinguish us from
brutes !

Wou'd I had never thought !—I had then been happy !
Reflection rivets woe upon the wretched !
Thought teaches me to feel a friend's lost worth !
When we have friends, to them we trust our griefs,
Our care lies lighten'd, and the mind sleeps calm :
To me, that comfort's lost !—I have no friend !
Oh ! I cou'd pine away this wretched life !
Lean, like a willow, trembling o'er a brook !
Sigh with the winds ! and murmur with the stream !

Count. His heart seems press'd with care. [*Aside.*
My

138 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

My gentle lord,

Why leave you thus the gaiety of friends ?
And why has grinding grief usurp'd your soul ?

Som. I found myself disorder'd, and I left you—
Oft am I thus—leave me, I'll soon return.

Count. Oh ! my dear lord, I am not soon deceiv'd,
Those care-bent brows suit not a bridegroom's face !
Are folded arms the gestures of delight ?
Or these sad groans the voice of inward joy ?
No, no—consider, I am now your wife !
'Tis mine to ease your cares, and bring you comfort !
If you have sorrows, I must claim my part ;
I sink not soon beneath a weight of woe—
If you deny me this, you love me not.

Som. Not love thee ! sayst thou ? Oh ! thou soul
of Somerset,

Cou'd those bright eyes be turn'd into my breast,
There wou'd you see how your suspicion wrongs me !
Let me look nigh !—let me gaze here with wonder !
Where's friendship now ? Why, reason yields to beauty !
What tho' the crimes, of which her foes accuse her,
Glar'd, broad as day-light, on my startled soul,
Angels play smiling in her wanton eyes,
And lend an awe to lightness—love reigns round her,
And when she speaks—the softest, sweetest music
Melts in ner voice, and charms away my grief.

Count.

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 139

Count. Oh! with what art you sooth my fainting spirits!

Then I am still your dear, your much-lov'd wife—

Why do I ask? those eyes confess I am!

But tell me—for you shou'd impart your cares—

Why are you thus?

Som. Oh!

Count. Nay, again you're cruel!

Still when I strive to search the cause, your voice

Sinks from the point, and answers with a groan.

Som. What cause?—I told thee I had been disorder'd—

Thy fears are the wild coinage of thy fancy,

A subtle self-tormentor!

Count. 'Tis well, my lord!

I guess to whom I owe my loss of power;

You have a friend can tell you tales of honour,

And teach you how to triumph o'er a wife,

Who has, indeed, had faults—but whose chief crime

Is loving you, perhaps, with too much fondness.

Som. What dost thou mean?—what friend?

Count. Why, Overbury!

I know your tutor chides your faulty conduct!

Go then, and make your peace—be meekly penitent,

Promise to err no more—and he'll forgive you.

Som. Hear me, sweet tyrant!—By my life, I swear
Thou'rt dear to me, as crowns to the ambitious!

Dear

140 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Dear as these eyes, which tremble on thy charms,
Or, as this heart, which aches with joy and anguish.

Count. Then I must tell you, Sir, your friend's a
villain !

Som. Have a care !

Let not thy rage transport thee to detraction.

Count. Oh ! were I but to speak his base attempt !

Som. What base attempt !

Count. No matter what it is :

I, sure, may be allow'd some secrets too.

Som. Nay, this is wrong !—to brand him first with
villain !

Then, in a dusky phrase, elude the charge !

Truth seldom lies conceal'd in mystery,

Clearly to reason she reveals her light,

And errors vanish, like a mist, before her.

Count. Why—what if he design'd against my honour ?

Som. Your honour ! 'tis impossible !—

Count. Form all that treacherous guilt wou'd dare
to act,

And sum it up in this pretended friend.

Som. I prithee, do not make me mad !—speak
plainly !

Count. Knowing your passion, he durst urge his own—
He told me you were false !—designing—jealous !—
Try'd every art of treachery to supplant you ;

And

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 141

And when he found his wiles were unsuccessful,
Attempted force, and threaten'd me with slander.

Som. Force!—Slander!—thou hast warm'd me!—
think once more!

He cou'd not be so base!

Count. He was.

Som. Impossible!—

Ere yet my fury mounts into a blaze,
Ere I upbraid him with these black designs,
I charge thee do not tax him wrongfully,
For thou may'st open such a scene of horror,
'Twill shake thee to behold it!

Dare you confirm it with an oath?

Count. I will.

Som. Nay, but weigh well what you presume to swear!
Oaths are of dreadful weight—and, if they're false,
Draw down damnation—those who murder fame,
Kill more than life-destroyers—Think again!
For, at that day, when each must stand arraign'd,
'Their lots will fall in the severest fires.

Count. By all my hopes,
What I have said—

Som. No more—I must believe you—
Believe you, said I! what must I believe?
If you prove false!—if you traduce my friend!
And wrong my faith! may sorrow blast thy beauties!

May

142 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

May conscience rise in all her dreadful triumph !
 Scare every sense ! and strike thee with distraction !
 Yet, sure thou'rt true ! those eyes which shine so sweetly,
 Can wear no dusky stain of barbarous falshood !—
 What then must Overbury be ? Reflection
 Sickens with doubt, and dies in dark confusion.

Count. My lord——

Som. Thou need'st not speak—I said I would be-
 lieve thee ;

Thou art my life, the fountain of my joy !
 Yet, let me think !—Force !—Slander !—yes, 'tis so !
 He's false ! he's false !—Curse on all treacherous
 friends !

Count. Nay, but I meant not thus to fire your anger,
 Forget a friend's first falshood,

Som. Never ! never !

No—tho' this day was vow'd to peace and love,
 Tho' crowds of noble guests have grac'd my joys ;
 Nay, tho' the king should add his sacred presence,
 My fury brooks no stay—my fame ! my honour !
 Both are concern'd, and rouse my soul to vengeance.

Enter Northampton.

Nor. Why are the bride and bridegroom thus retir'd ?
 Crouds of all ranks press in to join your pleasures !
 And every instrument of music vies

To

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 143

To found sweet notes, and swell the hours of love.

Som. Alas, my lord! even harmony grows harsh!
Thought's out o'tune, discord has struck my ear,
And my soul jars within me.

Nor. What's the cause?

Som. 'Tis a vile world, Northampton!
The oaths of friendship, like those made to girls,
Are meant but to betray, and broke o'course.

Nor. This I knew well before — but who has
wrong'd you?

Som. The darkest of all villains—a false friend!
But as I am a man, I will revenge it! —
Oh! what a change has my poor heart sustain'd!
But a few moments since, this man's lov'd memory
Sat soft, as brooding halcyons, on my soul;
Now my rous'd rage cou'd hunt him in full scent,
Till his last dust were scatter'd in the air,
And driven like chaff before the angry wind.

Nor. My lord, this seems th' extravagance of passion!
When anger rushes, unrestrain'd, to action,
Like a hot steed, it stumbles in its way!
The man of thought wounds deepest, and strikes safely;
Premeditation makes his vengeance sure!
And levels it directly to the mark.

Som. I cannot, like a courtier, kill with smiles!
My fury scorns to glow, conceal'd in embers:

No;

144 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

No ; it shall blaze abroad with flaming lustre !
 If I must fall, why I was born to die,
 And fall as a man shou'd—If I revenge me,
 I right my injur'd honour, as I ought.

Nor. My lord, this stream must have another course :
 This Overbury——

Som. Saidst thou Overbury !
 Now, by my soul, there's magic in the name,
 And my charm'd rage grows still as midnight silence !
 Why wou'dst thou speak it?—Let me not dwell upon
 him !

Talk of false friendship ! of abandon'd honour !
 Of hate ! revenge !—distraction !——
 But spare that name—at which my fury melts,
 Or guilt will smile, like sweet-ey'd innocence.

Count. My lord, I wish you cou'd surmount your
 anger.

'Tis nobler to forgive, than to revenge.

Som. Dost thou plead too !—why—he has wrong'd
 thy fame !

E'en to my ear has wrong'd it !—generous charmer !

Nor. Your frowns will blast what sprung but by
 your smiles.

Som. I'll think a while—your counsel shall direct
 me.

Thou

Thou injur'd friendship, my griev'd soul inspire
 With awful justice, and vindictive fire !
 Let my revenge, to match th' ungen'rous wrong,
 Be swift as eagles, and as lions strong !
 Dreadful as flames by furious whirlwinds driven,
 Or thunder bursting from offended heaven ! [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Northampton and Countess of Somerset.

Nor. **T**HE King comes here in private—then all's
 right,

And, in good time, we've stirr'd your husband's anger.

Count. The courtiers are in Overbury's interest.

Nor. No matter—they'll desert him in his fall :

Like Persians they adore the rising sun,
 But when the great man's glories shrink away,
 Shrubs, which grew under him, shoot up ungrateful,
 And brave him in declension—None assist him,
 No kind hand lifts him from engulfing ruin,
 But all join strength to press him lower still—
 You have not heard, perhaps, that Overbury
 Courts friendship with your Essex.

Count. How ! with Essex !

Nor. What if he should betray your letters to him ?

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Count.

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Count. The villain dares not !

Nor. If he does, you're lost——

What ! know you of his love to Isabella ?

Count. Oh ! name it not——

It cannot be—I've fear'd, but would not find it.

Nor. Wou'd 'twere a secret then—— but see this packet,

These are his letters to that Isabella.

Their superscriptions wanting—happy that !

To tell how I acquir'd 'em, would be tedious :

Let it suffice, these undirected papers

Shall bear the force of proofs to Somerset,

Most fatal to his friend. Sir Gervas Ell'ways,

Who bears a weighty part in this design,

Is coming tow'rds us—Please to leave him with me.

I am an exile from the royal presence,

But you, the King expects, should bless his eyes.

[*Exit Countess of Somerset.*]

That he sees Essex I am well inform'd,

And blew that spark to raise her to a flame.

Enter Sir Gervas Elloways.

Let me congratulate my faithful Elloways !

The Tower-lieutenancy will now be yours,

For Somerset has said it.

Ell. My kind lord !

Nor.

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 147

Nor. Nay, I have news
That more will please you, if you love Northampton.
The man I hate will soon be in my power.
All the proud steps, by which he climb'd to greatness,
Sink from his feet, and let him fall to ruin.

Ell. Can Somerset forsake him ?

Nor. He detests him.

Ell. Prodigious change!—this news indeed surprizes!

Nor. To gain the unbeliever to my wishes,
I stirr'd his temper with such cautious art,
That, ere his judgment cou'd exert its phlegm,
His blood took ferment from a warmth of passion :
Then, while his fiery spirit flam'd with rage,
In its full heat, I stamp'd it with revenge.

Ell. The depth of wisdom flows, in all your actions,
Like a strong current, which, oppos'd by piles,
Works gently thro', and saps the mound unseen,
Till, gathering force, it pours resistless in,
And the bank floats before it—End you there ?

Nor. No—Overbury's death must crown my conduct!

Ell. There's danger there !

Nor. Not so—I've weigh'd it well.
Th' assassinating Spanish way's unsafe,
Suspicion were its follower—and suspicion
Wou'd, like a bloodhound, trace our steps too near !
What think you of the close Italian's means ?

148 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Sure, silent poison?—Dare you be a friend?

Ell. I dare the worst.

Nor. Know then, that Somerset
Has noted Overbury as most intimate
With some, whose zeal is mark'd against the state:
Now to inflame the King with jealousy,
An embassy to Russia will be offer'd him:
This love and policy forbid him taking,
And if he not accept it, all's confirm'd;
It speaks him plainly loth to leave his faction,
And so he comes committed to your care.

Ell. The rest may be compleated easily:
'Tis but to change the doubted officers,
And place such round him as will suit our purpose.

Nor. No more—be secret.

Enter Somerset.

Som. Good Sir Gervas Elloways!
I greet you gladly, with your new-giv'n honour,
Which the King's pleasure, thus confirms by me.

[Delivers a commission.]

Ell. My lord, you bind me ever to your service.

Som. Oh—my Northampton!

Nor. Why that sigh, my lord?

Som. I have been thinking, when we lose a friend,
'Tis like an eye pluck'd from its bleeding orb.
No more the other holds the joy of sight,

But,

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But, ceaseless, weeps till it grows blind with anguish—
So mourns my widow'd soul for Overbury.

Nor. Why do you name him still thus tenderly?
Methinks your wrongs shou'd rise against your weakness,

And sting you with reflection.

Som. Ay, mention those, and I relapse to fury!
My restless thoughts drive round like veering winds,
Forgetful of their center!—yet the soul,
Like a soft babe, inur'd to foolish fondness,
Is hard to wean from wailing—Oh! forgive me:
'Tis the last struggle of expiring friendship.

Nor. Your passions late were wing'd, like vengeful
whirlwinds,

Now they sink, fighting, to a gale of sorrow!
Shame on your softness—where's the soul of Somerset?
Where's that fierce fire which us'd to kindle in you,
And sparkle, from your eyes, in fierce resentment?
What! all extinguish'd?

Som. No: I am still the same.

I've the King's orders for this embassy,
And Overbury's sent for.

Nor. If he refuses,

We place him on the pinnacle of fate!
There shall big-gathering winds sing round his head,
And whirl him to destruction—Ell'ways be ready.

[Exit Elloways.

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Som. But, my good lord, this treachery startles me,
'Tis an unmanly vengeance.

Nor. Fye, my lord!

Som. Why, rather, not accuse him face to face,
And, with an open anger, prove the charge?

Nor. There may be guilt, you wou'd not wish to
prove—

Look on these letters! sent without direction!
Artful and safe that caution—Know you the hand?—
How soft are the contents!

Som. Wou'd I were blind!

Nor. Wou'd not he wrong his King who wrongs his
friend!

Come, come, my lord—you must be won to wisdom!
Tho' the soft dove brood, gall-less, o'er your breast,
Yet let the wary serpent arm your mind.

Som. O heaven! he comes! he shocks me with his
presence!

Nor. See!—Effex leaves him—had he been your
friend,

He wou'd not thus be seen. My lord—farewel. [*Exit.*

Som. 'Tis death to meet him!—yet I cannot stir.

Enter Sir Thomas Overbury.

Over. My lord, I come obedient to your summons,
The

The force of friendship overflows my griefs,
And I must love you still.

Som. Dissembling villain ! *[Aside.]*

I have a message from the King, this morning,
That will, I doubt, surprize you—'tis his pleasure,
That you prepare yourself, without delay,
For a short embassy to Russia.

Over. The warning's sudden !

Som. The design is deep !
Perhaps too, not propos'd by your best friends.

Over. Now, my lov'd lord, I'll try your friend-
ship's faith !

When sick'ning reason labours in the mind,
Advice is the soul's cordial—How shall I act ?

Som. If honesty's your guide, you cannot stray.

Over. If to be blest and honest were the same,
I shou'd not be unhappy.

Som. He seems innocent.

'Tis a hard struggle to dissemble thus ! *[Aside.]*

Over. If your looks wrong you not, you are disorder'd !

Som. Have you resolv'd ? I wait for your reply.

Over. So cool in your advice!—nay, now I read you!
Northampton and your wife !—Serpent and woman !
Have turn'd you 'gainst your friend !
And your plain mind, unfashion'd for deceit,
Knows not to veil its frailty.

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Som. Have a care——

Over. What ! am I threaten'd too ? — ungrateful
Somerfet !

Have I advis'd you with a brother's tenderness,
Pin'd for your peace, and made your cares my own,
To be rewarded thus ? — Here end our friendship !
And, for my answer, I desire a pause.

Som. Then I must tell the King, you're not resolv'd ?

Over. That as you please — I'll serve him till I die,
Till the reward of loyalty o'ertakes me :
For patriots still must fall for statesmens' safety,
And perish by the country they preserve.

Som. 'Tis dangerous, thus, to tax the royal gratitude !
I see you're rash, and wou'd advise you better —
If, when you touch'd me in too weak a part,
I shrunk — 'twas from quick sense of aching pain.
I was to blame — I knew not what I said —
Excuse it as a friend.

Over. Said you, you were to blame ? — if you're sincere,
My fit of rage, like lightning on a desert,
But flashes — and is lost.

Som. Can he be false ?
And yet I must not doubt ——

[*Aside.*

Over. What ! still uneasy ?

Som. You know, I'm rais'd on fortune's fav'rite spoke !
If I grow giddy, I shall move away,

And

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And roll, at once, to ruin.

Over. Let me guard you—

And, to be near you, not accept this embassy—
Form some fair cause, and urge it as my answer.

Som. I'll to the King this instant, and attempt it.

[*Exit.*

Over. This message, from the King, bears some
design,

But I'm more touch'd with Somerset's disorder!
Let me still mark him—As he passes on,
He starts!—stops short!—and ponders in suspense!—
Now he proceeds!—All this shou'd bode some mischief!

Enter the Countess of Somerset.

Count. Now, now, support me, pride, or I am lost!

[*Aside.*

Over. Ha! she here!

Count. Why start you, calm, insulting man?
Is love a crime too great to be forgiven?
But thy cold soul admits no warmth of passion:
I, like the sun, darted too fierce a blaze!
Yet, thy chill wishes
Dawn'd some sick hope, when Isabella's eyes,
Like a pale moon, gleam'd her faint beams upon thee.

Over. How! knows she that? [*Aside.*] When
honour lights up love,
Th' illumin'd soul burns lambent with a flame,

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Pure as the hallow'd altars—Such my hope !
Such were the wishes mov'd by Isabella.

Count. How I disdain thee !—yes, I scorn thee !—
hate thee !

Thou, who cou'dst stoop to expose a woman's weakness !

To taint her fame, and blast her to the world !—
All my fierce passions rise with that reflection,
Inward they rage—a winding train takes fire,
The flashy blaze runs swift thro' ev'ry vein,
And my brain splits with agony !

Over. You wrong me, Madam—I, with humblest
gratitude,

Thank'd and conceal'd your passion—If your fame
Is tainted—your divorce has caus'd it—Modesty
Must guard a woman's seemings—

Oh ! that my words, like the sun's powerful rays,
Were with attraction arm'd—till, from your breast,
This flood of frailty rose, exhal'd in sighs,
Or flow'd away in streams of soft repentance:

Count. Upbraider !

Over. I not upbraid your love, but your wild passions,
Which wou'd, like envious shades, eclipse those beauties,
That else, with justice, sure, must charm mankind !
But, Madam, think—there's not a homely peasant,
If grac'd with innocence, tho' nurs'd in toil,

But

But boasts more glory than a tainted grandeur.

Count. Preaching statue!

Where are my letters?—thou detain'st 'em poorly,
With aim to awe my anger.

Over. Ere you ask'd 'em,
Mov'd by a conscious hope to ease your fears,
Honour induc'd me thus to give 'em up:
Now, they are yours again—But their effect
Will still live in me, and whene'er your image
Enriches my remembrance—the humblest gratitude
Will teach my heart new tenderness. [*Gives letters.*]

Count. This generous act has waken'd love again,
And pity pleads against me—What shall I do!
If I continue here, and he thus charms me,
My scheme, at once, is air—Like jarring elements
My passions war—and thought opposing thought,
Shakes my whole frame, till I am mad with doubting.
[*Aside.*]

Over. Why are you thus disturb'd?

Count. Can I so ill reward his generous heart,
As to apply these letters to his ruin,
Which might have ruin'd me, had he with-held 'em?
And yet I must—Fate's slippery ice has caught me,
And, if I not slide on, I sink for ever.
Let me not stay—O wretch! death hovers o'er thee!
He grasps a dart, and, in pale fury, shakes it
High o'er thy head!—Now, now it falls, and strikes
thee! I cannot

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I cannot bear to see what I have caus'd.

[Exit in confusion.

Over. Or I'm ensnar'd—or madness seiz'd the
countess.

Enter Isabella.

My Isabella!

Isa. Oh! let us join as friends, who meet in sorrow,
To weep!—and sigh!—and mingle mutual woes!

Over. What wou'd my love's soft fears divine of ill,
That merits this sweet sadness?

Isa. Oh! I am wild! and say I know not what—
This will explain.

Enter Sir Gervas Elloways, and guards.

Ell. Sir Thomas Overbury,

I come to bring you an unwelcome message;
'Tis the King's pleasure, that you stand confin'd,
Close in the Tower, a prisoner to the state.

Over. What have I done, that I should be a prisoner?

Ell. Has not the Earl of Somerset inform'd you?

Over. The Earl of Somerset!—What dost thou mean?
The polar star shall be no longer fix'd,
But turn delusive to the sailor's eye,
Sooner than Somerset prove false to me—
May I not see my friend?

Ell.

Ell. I dare not grant it.

Over. No!—that's hard, indeed!

I thought I cou'd have met the worst, unmov'd;

[*Turns to Isabella.*

But to see thee thus press'd with griefs not thine,

I cannot bear the pang which rend my soul!—

Teach me some art, but to assuage thy sorrows,

And mine are griefs to smile at.

Isa. The voice of music can compose distraction:

Oh! then, let thine but sooth me into comfort;

Say something soft and kind—But whither fly you?

Perhaps to death!

Over. What's death but losing thee?

Life is a trifle, where no love enriches it;

And when the guiltless die the death of traitors,

The scaffold steps, but, like the patriarch's ladder,

Form an ascent to heaven.

Isa. Oh! talk not thus!

There's madness in that thought.

Over. Nay, do not weep!

Thy grief attracts with such a melting force—

That my lost soul evaporates to air,

Glides in each breath, and mingles with thy sighs—

Help manhood, or I'm lost!—lead to the Tower.

Isa. That place bodes ruin—there, the good sixth

Henry,

Clarence,

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Clarence, and royal Edward's infants fell—
Such secret death, perhaps, may prove thy fate.

Over. Why dost thou fright thyself at fancy'd ills?

Isa. I have a thousand, thousand anxious fears!—
No cheering hope dawns thro' the cloudy woe,—
'Tis darkness all—What will not malice dare?
But if I must—

Over. Oh! I cou'd gaze for ever!

Thus, when high seas swell foaming o'er the coast,
The wretch, who treads the dangerous beach is lost;
Plung'd in his fate, like me, he strives to rise,
And seeks the swallow'd land with wistful eyes!
But, as his arms extend to reach the shore,
The waves o'erwhelm him, and he's seen no more.

[Exeunt severally.]

ACT IV. SCENE *The Tower.*

Northampton and Elloways meet.

Nor. **E**LL'WAYS be swift, for Somerset's unsettled!

The Countess too, who lately urg'd his death,
Melts in a fit of softness from her purpose!
Before the stream of ruin then rolls rapid,

To

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To bear him down the tide—For, if it turns,
'Twill overwhelm us all.

Ell. Now, by my soul,
The youthful warrior, flush'd with his first hopes,
Burns not with half that heat for fame and conquest,
Which fires my wishes to compleat your will.

Nor. Weston and Franklin—are they both resolv'd?

Ell. They are.

Nor. Have they the wine the Countess has prepar'd?

Ell. They have,
And bring it as a present from Earl Somerset.

Nor. Then he, who late, by royal favour shone,
That favour veil'd, shall straight be dark again.
So waters, at hot noon, aspire in steams,
And thin'd by heat, float gay aloft in air!
But when the sun's exhaling power withdraws,
Chill'd by the cold of night, they fall in dews,
And mix with humble dust, like Overbury.

Ell. See, my good lord, where Isabella comes,
To visit in the Tower her prison'd lover!

Nor. My faithful Ell'ways, watch my rival well;
And if your ear catch a suspicious sound,
Bring me immediate notice. [Exit Ell.]

Enter Isabella.

So, Madam, your proud hero falls his plume!

Isa.

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I/a. Is that a Noble's voice? The brave, I thought,
Scorn'd all advantage o'er a fallen foe,
And rais'd him to be worthy their revenge.

Nor. Since there's a storm upon your angry brow,
I am not arm'd to meet, I must retire. [Exit.

I/a. So, villains, when they gain th' ascent of power,
Like ravens, pois'd before the glorious sun,
Spread a black cloud, and darken all beneath.

Enter Overbury, followed by Elloways listening.

Over. Are you thus kind? blest with your lovely
presence,

A prison is a paradise—sweet mourner!
Matchless in joy—but in thy grief all heavenly!
In thee, as in a dew-drop on a flower,
A thousand mingled beauties glittering play,
Which rise, as the eye turns, in still new prospects,
And in each different light, refract new lustre.

I/a. Why wilt thou charm me thus?—thy tuneful
voice

Floats soft like music, melting in the winds!
A flutt'ring rapture fills my trembling breast,
Swells in each vein, and pants with every thought!
Yet do I view thee, with such dangers round thee,
That e'en thy sight is painful!

Over.

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Over. Wer't not for thee, my soul wou'd wing her
flight,
To rest in realms of everlasting bliss.

Isa. How know'st thou that?—Weigh first what
is the soul :

'Tis not a shade that will dissolve in air,
Nor matter which, by time, can be consum'd :
Oh ! then, be cautious, for the best are frail ;
Venture not rashly, on an unknown being—
E'en the most perfect shun the brink of death,
And shudder at the prospect of futurity.

Over. What means my soul ?

Isa. A thousand deaths are hov'ring round thy head !
If I have e'er deserv'd thy love—Oh ! think
Thy guardian angel now inspires my tongue,
And warns thee, if thou canst, to 'scape disguis'd !

Ell. I've heard enough. [Exit unseen.

Over. No ; safe in innocence, I'll dare their malice.
To fly, wou'd be to leave my fame unclear'd,
My fame, much dearer to me than my life !

Isa. Forgive me, if I err ;
'Tis but a fault that springs from too much love !
Should'st thou be lost !—Oh ! think upon my griefs,
See me distracted, without hope of comfort,
Profaning heaven, reading the air with shrieks,
Bursting with groans, and raving with despair !

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Over.

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Over. Why was I born to make thee thus unhappy?
But see, where one observes!

'Tis dangerous here to talk—To-night farewell,
And if to-morrow blesses me again,

I shall have news to tell you.

[*Exit.*]

Isa. Till then, farewell.

Enter Cleora in haste.

Cle. My friend, forgive me, if officious zeal
Forc'd me to seek you here—your foe, the Countess—

Isa. What of the Countess?

Cleo. Flies about disorder'd!

So stung with guilt, no place can give her ease!
Wild 'twixt the fallies of remorse and love,
She wrote these lines, and trusted 'em with me;
I think it not a treachery to betray 'em.

Isa. 'Tis pious treachery that reveals a mischief;
'Tis justice to yourself, and to the world.

[*Looks on the letter.*]

To Overbury!—How my heart beats at it!

Cleo. She there, repeats, and urges an old flame,
Proffers him freedom, wou'd partake his flight,
And owns the wiles that have seduc'd her lord.
Nay, more—the guards are, by her agents, brib'd,
And your name's us'd to cover the deceit,
That, should they fail, she might be still secure.

Isa.

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Isa. Here too, she urges him to feign some illness,
That, so retir'd to rest, and none left near him,
She in the silent darkness introduc'd,
May find him in his chamber, and instruct him
What means may bring him safety:
Fate sent this clue to unravel all her falsehood;
Flatter her artfully with his compliance:
And if she comes—But see, the Earl of Somerset.
Night steals upon us fast—Be sure you bring her.

[*Exit Cleora.*]

Enter Earl of Somerset.

Som. My Isabella!—why that mournful brow?
Why do those eyes, that sparkled gladness round 'em,
Lose their keen lustre now, and look so languid?

Isa. Shou'd I forget, my lord, that fatal day,
When my dear father's trembling hand prest yours,
His dying eyes, wet with paternal tears,
While agonizing sweats bedew'd his face,
To you, my lord, he rais'd his falt'ring voice,
And gave me to your care? Kind was the thought,
And pleas'd, he bade farewell—and breath'd his last.

Som. Have I not us'd thee with the tend'rest care,
And chear'd thy virtue with the smiles of fortune?

Isa. Oh! my good lord, you've been a father to me,
And 'tis for you these swelling sighs rise sad,
And my tears flow for gratitude.

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Som. What mean'st thou?

Isa. If Overbury wrong'd—

Som. No more of Overbury!

My child, avoid him, as thou wou'dst thy ruin.

Isa. You are misl'd—

Som. The subject's harsh—farewel.

Isa. You must not go—thus on my knees, I beg you,
For your own sake, but hear me—you're betray'd.
Oh! think how dear this man was to your soul!
By friendship join'd, you comforted each other;
Joy crown'd your days, your minds were then serene,
Your thoughts had harmony, and you were blest.

Som. Indeed, I thought so.

Isa. Oh! reflect again!

Why have you cast him thus unkindly from you,
And open'd your dear breast to vile Northampton?

Som. Why dost thou injure thus my lord Northampton?

Isa. One, who wou'd undermine an orphan's virtue,
Is sure unworthy of her guardian's friendship.

Som. And cou'd Northampton that?

Isa. I blush t'affirm it.

Yet more your virtue wanders in the dark!
The Countess—

Som. Who!—I charge thee, name not her!
Shou'd I but hear a word to taint my wife,
'Twould urge me so, I might forget my nature,
And use thee harshly!

Isa.

Isa. 'Tis death to undeceive you !

But, in the cause of virtue, I am arm'd
To meet all dangers boldly—be prepar'd,
For I must wound you with such piercing accents,
That your poor heart, I fear, will bleed with anguish !

Som. Suspense is the worst rack—speak what thou
know'st.

Isa. Read this—'twill speak all for me.

[*Gives a letter.*]

Som. 'Tis my wife's hand—ha ! To Sir Thomas
Overbury !

A strange direction that ! where had it you ?

Isa. From one she trusted as her messenger.

Som. Sure 'tis some mist, which hell has rais'd to
blind me !

My eyes belie her—let me again peruse it !

Isa. 'Tis as I thought.

[*Aside.*]

Som. 'Tis all black forgery !—

False Isabella !

Isa. Who is false, my lord ?

Som. Why thou art false—I prithee, own thou art ;
For should an angel charge her with these crimes,
I fear I shou'd misname that angel, fiend !

Isa. 'Tis but to wait her presence, if you doubt it ;
Night is already round us, and ere long,
She comes, conceal'd, to find him—Be you witness,

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And then, who's false, discover.

Som. If thou art so, fly, where I ne'er may see thee !
But if thou'rt true, then I'm a wretch indeed.

Isa. My lord, retire—I think, she comes already.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Countess of Somerset and Cleora.

Count. O my Cleora, whither am I going ?
But thou art faithful, nor wilt chide my frailties !
I go t'atone my Overbury's wrongs,
To meet my love—my love!—What's then my husband ?
Hold brain—resist that rushing rack of thought—
The night, now brooding o'er her gloomy shades,
Owns not a spectre half so foul as I am.
Oh state of horror ! Oh despair ! O shame !

Cleo. Yet think—

Count. Fain wou'd I—but all thought forsakes me !
My flame revives !—each fit comes stronger on me !
Varying convulsions torture every nerve !
I love ! I rage !—hate—fear—and love again !
And burn, and die with a whole war of passions !

Cleo. But will you see him ?

Count. See him ?—Oh ! I must—
My soul will have it so—the wrongs, I meant him,
Require atonement, more than love can give him,
Come—guide me, my Cleora !

[*Exeunt.*

Enter

Enter Northampton and Elloways.

Nor. Escaping ! say'st thou ?

Ell. What I then heard was little.

But now a trusted yeoman of the guard
Betray'd their whole design of present flight ;
But why have you, thus led me thro' the darkness ?

Nor. The darkness best befits my purpos'd vengeance.

Ell. What means my lord by vengeance ?

Nor. The poison not yet given—my sword shall end
him.

Secure the passage—bar the outward doors,
While I resolve within, where Weston left us. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Somersfet and the Countess, meeting in the dark.

Count. 'Tis wond'rous dark ! and night wears
double horror !

Each step, methinks, I hear my husband's voice !
'The creep of distant whispers damps my soul !
Hark ! how the thunder rolls ! the wind too roars !
Who's that, my Overbury ?

Som. Yet hold my heart ! [*Aside.*

Count. You had my letter then ?

Som. I had—Oh heaven !

Count. Reach me your hand, and lead me to your
chamber !

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For I have much to say—but stay—Cleora
 Waits me hard by—I'll caution her a moment,
 And find you here again. [Exit.

Som. Why do I live?
 Let me turn wild!—Or tear out my fond heart,
 That cou'd be thus far wrong'd, and not discern it!
 O thou false woman! O my injur'd friend!
 Mad, rash, deluded Somerset!

*Enter Northampton from a private door in the back
 scene; a light within.*

Nor. Now, Overbury, die! [Draws.

Som. Villain!—Northampton! [Draws.

Nor. Save me, some angel, from this strange illusion!

Som. View my eyes well!—do they not flash with
 fury?

And tell thee, that 'tis Somerset thou look'st on?

Nor. Northampton was not born to look with fear,
 Tho' hell blaz'd angry in the eyes of Somerset.
 My honour's equal!—my descent more noble!
 Come, we mistake each other—as a friend,
 I'd moderate this rage.

Som. Thou sycophant!
 Thou wouldst again betray me to thy friendship,
 To ruin, with more ease, my Isabella.

Nor. Ha!

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 169

Som. But she is proof against thy base assaults :
My wife was easy, and success there met thee,
And Overbury was to fall your victim.

Nor. No more—I can no longer brook this railing ;
Whate'er I do, I always dare to answer !
Let this defend it all—

[*Fight, Northampton disarmed.*

Som. Why art thou living in the power of Somerset ?
I wish thee dead, but dare not kill thee basely ;
Give me the chance once more— [Offers his sword.

Nor. No ; take my life ;
'Tis now not worth defending.

Som. Live, and repent!—and be as curs'd as I am !
Go—save me from the pain thy presence gives me !
Now, whither shall I wander ? [*Exit Northampton.*

Going, meets the Countess entering.

Death and confusion !

Count. I heard, or I'm deceiv'd, the clash of weapons,
Yet was the passage barr'd—yon gleam of light
Shews a drawn sword bent hither.

Som. Tremble at it—'tis the sword of justice !

Count. Ha ! let me not betray myself—'tis Somerset.

[*Aside.*

What mean you, Sir ? methinks your words sound
angry—

Som.

170 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Som. Traiteurs! false! foul! fickle—damn'd—lovely
traiters!

Know'st thou this letter?—thou ungrateful woman!

Count. Now I am lost indeed!

Som. What can thy guilt expect?

Count. You will not kill me?

Som. Not kill thee, say'st thou! yes, deceiver!
Hear me;

Hadst thou as many lives as thou hast crimes,
My fury wou'd reach all—wrong'd love and friendship,
With double cry, demand thy death in vengeance!

Count. Oh! but do hear me.

Som. Not one firen word.

Count. Oh! by the endearing softness of that bosom,
Look but on her you lov'd so much! so lately!
See how she pants for life! and begs for mercy!
Let me die, flow, some ling'ring death of sorrow,
But send me not to the eternal bar,
With all my crimes about me!

Som. Do, crocodile, weep on—thy tears become thee.
Think what I suffer! think how thou hast wrong'd me!
Oh! I will stab thee!—tho' my heart-strings burst.

Count. Yet, but a moment, hear me!

Som. No—I will not;
Be dumb for ever—for, whene'er you speak,
You bring a base infection o'er my anger,
And I, at once, grow sick with pity—Off!

Why

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 173

Why cling'st thou to me?

Count. O spurn me!—drag me—

Yet my poor limbs shall grasp thee to the last,
And e'en my dying groans plead soft for pardon.

Som. Wherefore, just heav'n, has guilt such power
to charm?

Oh!—rise, and take those mournful eyes away;
Thy beauty, and my love combine to save thee,
And my sword turns its point against my purpose.
I cannot see thee bleed!—Oh! my torn heart!
Ungrateful! go—

Fly from my rage!—far hence, on some lone isle,
Safe in thy frauds, and pleas'd with ruin, smile;
But shun these shameful eyes, which thus deplore
Thy loss—yet never must behold thee more.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Somerſet ſolus.

HOW have I wander'd thro' a maze of errors,
And labour'd for deſtruction!—Of mankind,
I had but one true friend, and him, alone,
Of all mankind, have wrong'd—Reproachful thought!
Oh! Peace of mind! thou boſom balm of nature!
Thou that canſt make the labourer's miſery ſweet,
And

172 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

And cause e'en smiles amidst the pangs of death,
Where shall I find thee?

Enter Isabella.

Come not near me!

Let me not hear thee speak, lest I betray thee,
But fly me as a desp'rate, dangerous villain.

Isa. I come, my lord, to reconcile your soul
To the sweet joys of peace—

Som. Talk not of peace! 'tis gone! 'tis fled with
honour!

Honour, once lost, can never be retriev'd!

My thoughts are furies all!—and turn upon me!

I feel their whips!—They lash me with remorse!

My brain grows hot!—Hell glows in my mad bosom!

Isa. Your friend yet knows not how you were misled.

Som. But there's a sense of shame that knows it all!
Tho' mountains shadow'd me, they cou'd not hide it!
My red'ning cheeks, and my moist eyes wou'd speak it!
Let me fly, far as the vast ocean rolls,
Rather than see the friend I've basely injur'd.

Isa. Fly but to Overbury—tell him all!
And, once more met in the strict band of friendship,
United, rise the pillars of your country.

Som. How must he scorn me, when he knows my
treachery!

I cannot

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 173

I cannot bear that thought !

Isa. Yet the mild king—

Som. For thy poor father's sufferings in his cause,
The royal ear will listen to thy pleadings :

Oh ! fly, and swiftly save my friend from ruin !

Isa. But look, my lord !—See where the countess
comes !

Som. What say'st thou ? ha !—I cannot bear their
presence !

Oh ! for a whirlwind's rage to snatch her from me !

A hell of mischief kindles in her eyes,

And horrors blaze around her !—Let's avoid her !

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Northampton and Countess of Somerset.

Nor. Now, haughty Somerset ! I'm well reveng'd !
My fullen genius tow'rs, with scorn, above thee,
And smiles at disappointment.

Count. My lord Northampton,
Tho' strongly urg'd, I feel a woman's softness !
Revenge, remorse, and love divide my soul,
Like three wild streams that rush against each other !

Nor. Yet, still, be resolute,
Summon your reason to your passion's aid !
Think how you're treated by your angry lord,
Menac'd, cast off, and but revenge can save you.

Count.

174 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Count. Now you have urg'd the flint again to sparkle,
And flash'd up all the latent fire within me !
Die, Overbury !—Somerset !—die all !
Let the world burn to be my funeral pile,
And nature groan as I do !

Enter Elloways.

Nor. What news, Elloways ?

Ell. The deed is done !

So deadly is the poison he has swallow'd,
There's not a nerve but has receiv'd its death :
Horror and madness shall infect his brain,
Till ev'ry struggling vital, torn with pangs,
Must burst at once, and tortur'd life forsake him.

Count. Mean'st thou all this of Overbury ?

Ell. Of him—We brought the wine which you
prepar'd,

As a sent pledge of friendship from your lord ;
Straight, with an eager haste, he snatch'd the cup !—
Give me the draught, said he !—then swell'd the brim,
And, thro' his lips, he drain'd it to the last.
And now there's not a health-restoring herb,
Which the sun smiles on, can expel th' infection.

Count. Was it the wine I sent ?

Ell. Madam, it was.

Count. Then shall I never know a moment's peace !
Villain,

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 175

Villain, be curst!—What have we done, Northampton?

Nor. A deed, which is not now to be recall'd.

Count. And dost think heav'n will conceal this murder?

No! we shall be pursu'd with hourly vengeance!
Dreams will disclose it; or, if night wants eyes,
Lightning will flash, and point us out to justice.

Nor. Will you be mad?

Count. I will—you have undone me!

Plung'd me for ever in the depth of misery!
Hark!—there's a tell-tale wind groans hollow under us,
And the earth heaves with wonder!

Nor. Her grief distracts her!

Count. 'Tis false! Thy tongue shall never more
delude me!

Ha!—Murder's shriek'd already in my ears!
Hark! Heav'n rings with murder!—the red clouds
Rain a whole sea of smoking blood upon us!
Oh! I am stain'd all over!—Murder!—Murder!

[*Runs off.*]

Ell. My lord, this fit may prove a dangerous frenzy.

Nor. Our lives are set upon this single cast.

Retire we to some safe retreat a while,
Where we may watch th' event.

[*Exit.*]

Ell. What shall I do?

Fly

176 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Fly from my post I cannot—that pleads guilty !
Poor Overbury comes !

Enter Sir Thomas Overbury.

How fares my noble prisoner ?

Over. Why just as noble prisoners ever fare,
Like lambs encompass'd by devouring wolves,
Or harmless birds with kites and ravens round 'em.

Ell. I cannot hear him speak—his presence pains
me. *[Exit.*

Over. I know not why, but I am shock'd of late !
My dreams are dreadful—Be it as it may ;
While virtue arms me, what have I to fear ?
This cold clay cottage is but the soul's prison,
And death, at worst, is but a furly friend,
Who conquers to give liberty.

Enter Somerset.

'Tis well, my lord, you can at last remember me,
But had my Somerset been thus confin'd,
I had not learnt to shun him.

Som. Oh, my friend !
I'm not the Somerset, whom once you knew ;
I'm alter'd much of late.

Over. Ay, thou art marry'd !

Som. That was the fatal rock we both have split on !
You,

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 177

You, like a skilful mariner, discern'd it—
But I, bewitch'd by the curst fiend's voice,
Sail'd on, regardless, 'till we struck on ruin.

Over. Why—dost thou repent it?

Som. Repent it, said you?—

Oh! I cou'd rave!—but, 'tis too late a penitence,
For I have wrong'd thy friendship, and undone thee!

Over. Nay, that I still believe thou cou'dst not do!

Som. Thou dost not know how base thy friend has
been!—

Oh! that fair devil has ensnar'd my soul,
And stain'd it o'er with falshood—I, led by her,
Accus'd thee to the king.

Over. Forbid it, heav'n!

Left I grow sick of life—and curse mankind!

Som. Oh!—'tis too true! Wrought by my faithless
wife,

And curst Northampton—I contriv'd thy ruin!

Over. Why look'st thou, then, like man, who art
a monster?

Som. Yet by the memory of our dear friendship!—

Over. How dares thy tongue profane the name of
friendship?

Haste to the king!—clear up my sully'd fame,
Or, may'st thou always bear some mark of traitor,
That every one may know, despise, and shun thee.

Vol. I.

M

Som.

178 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Som. Hear me but speak—

Over. Why should'st thou grate my ear?
The bird of death's shrill scream—the hiss of serpents,
Are music to thy voice!—my sick'ning soul
Faints at thy presence—and thy stay wou'd kill me!

Som. Yet I must stay—'till you forgive, or pity me.

Over. Name not forgiveness—nor expect my pity.
Be gone! there's treachery couch'd in this delay!
Mean'st thou to bear more mischief to the king?

Som. Rather than pierce me with such words as
these,
Strike through my heart, that bleeds to 've done you
wrong,

Here—take my sword—kill me—but, as I fall,
Reach me thy hand—say, but thou hast forgiv'n me!
And I shall die in peace.

Over. Take back thy sword—I wou'd not use it
basely,
Thou know'st, I wou'd not—Go, for ever from me!
And when I hear of an ungrateful wretch,
A fawning slave, who smiles, while he betrays—
Then will I think of Somerset.

Som. Distraction!
Canst thou? but, peace—I have deserv'd it all!
Life's a disease, which I want strength to bear,
And wish for death to cure me—What was I born to?

Shame

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 179

Shame on the guilt that bids me bear these scorns,
And not dare think 'em injuries.

Over. (*After a long pause*)—Oh! Somerset!

[*Both stand silent: Overbury observes the posture of Somerset.*]

Can all this grief be real?

Som. What shall I say?

Over. Had any other thus contriv'd my ruin,
I cou'd have borne it with a manly patience!
But from thy hand! my friend! my very self!—
Such unexpected wrongs have shook my soul!
But—I forgive thee all—

Som. Oh! joy! Oh, friend—

Forgive my softness too! my tears will flow,
While I re-join thee, thus, to my glad breast:

Over. I feel my heart bound high with throbbing
transport!

And wou'd speak more, but the flow-rising words
Die in big, unborn accents on my tongue.

I feel, e'en now, a faintish damp all o'er me,
And I am sick at heart—But here comes one,
Whose heav'nly brightness can disperse all clouds!
My life! my Isabella!

Enter Isabella, running into his arms.

Isa. Live—live, my Overbury!

M 2

Scarce

180 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Scarce can I speak my transport!—but the king!
The gracious king—

Over. What of the king, my love?

Isa. Has yielded to my suit in thy behalf,
And giv'n thee liberty!

Over. I thank thy goodness!
And blessings croud about his royal head,
Who heard my Isabella's prayer with pity.
How my soul swells with ecstasy!—my friend!
My Isabella!—Why do you not rejoice?
Rejoice in love! in friendship! liberty!

Som. Live long thus blest'd.

Over. Here, in soft sighs, I'll pour my pleasures
forth—

Gaze!—'till I e'en grow giddy with delight!
Now, heav'n, thou art too kind.

Isa. Oh happy day!
So sweet a calm, as my late cares are hush'd in,
Ne'er yet succeeded such a threatening tempest?
But you, methinks, look pale!

Over. No—say not so;
My heart is but oppress'd, and sick with transport!—
Another start!—that rapture was so strong,
It shot quite thro', and trembled to my soul!
Another yet!—nay, now I scarce support it—
My spirits sink, exhausted with delight,

And

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 181

And nature reels beneath it.

Ifa. Oh ! help ! he faints !

Som. Heav'n ! a cold dew,

Like that of death, o'erspreads his icy temples.

Help ! who waits there ? *[Enter Attendants,*

Ifa. My love ! my Overbury !

Return to life—'tis Isabella calls !

Over. Where, where are now my joys ?

All fled at once—Oh ! Somerset ! I'm poison'd !

Som. Good heaven forbid !

Over. The wine !—the wine you sent !

Som. Say'st, thou, I sent ?

Alas ! you are impos'd on !

Over. Then 'twas thy wife,

And she disguis'd it with thy powerful name.

Som. Ten thousand plagues o'ertake her for the deed !

Oh ! if she acted this unnatural guilt,

May all the woes of vengeance be her portion !

Haunt her, pale ghosts ! Eternal anguish grind her !

Lash her, ye furies ! Adders, twist around her !

And let despair and endless torment seize her !

Over. Ha !—what a shoot was there !—my blood
boils in me !

Flames wind about my breast—my brain burns red,

And my eyes swim in a blue sea of sulphur !

182 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Stand off!—and let me breathe!—what's that grim
form,

That stalks along! and creeps so pale upon me?
I know the meagre phantom now!—'tis death!
He's gone!—and now the heav'ns all open to me!
A flight of angels swoop upon my head,
And clap their wings about me!

Som. What a slave is man, when passion masters him?
My want of reason is the cursed source
Of all their miseries: But I'm trebly curs'd!
I feel for him, for her, and for myself.
What place in hell is there reserv'd for me?
Sure that which holds the greatest share of pain!

Over. There's death again!
What unmov'd! beamless! hollow! limy eyes
The bone-built monster stares with! there he struck
me!

'Tis done!—I mount!—I rise above the clouds!
My brain grows giddy!—now 'tis wond'rous hot!
The rays scorch strong—the stars spout streaming fire!
I'll shade me in the moon's dark body!—Hold!
The sun's reflection's there—Oh! help!—defend me!

Som. What can I do to ease thee?

Over. Who touch'd me?—'twas a cold, and
deadly hand!

It

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 183

It makes me shrink !—save me ! where am I now ?
I'm chain'd in the chill region of the north !
My blood's all frost !—and passing my hot veins,
It hisses in its motion !—The bleak winds
Dip their broad wings in seas of melted snow,
And sweep whole winter o'er me !—I shiver at it !
My teeth are turn'd to ice, and, as they chatter,
Break in their striking—Where's friendship now to
warm me ?

Som. My friend !—my Overbury !

Over. Oh, Somerset !

Where have I been ?—my life is at a period !
Poor Isabella !—she's o'erwhelm'd with grief !
Let me conjure thee, by my dying friendship,
To comfort all her sorrows !

Som. Wherefore do I not rave ? But heav'n is just !
To lose my senses, is to lose my pain.

Oh ! I resign me to th' impartial hand
Of justice, nor dare murmur at my fate.

Over. Hark ! the wind roars !—the seas begin to
swell !

The billows roll !—now ! now they drive upon me !
Oh ! save me, or I'm lost !—what ! must I perish ?
Is there no hold ?—not one kind, friendly plank !
Helpless indeed !—thus in the gulf, I sink—
Never to rise again.

[*Dies.*

Isa.

184 SIR THOMAS OVERBURY.

Ifa. Hover a while, dear shade, and I'll o'ertake thee.

Oh ! for a dagger now !—Death, give me ease !

He comes !—I feel him at my heart already !

He brings me all I wish !

Som. Alas ! she swoons !

Be quick, and bear her gently from the body—

But, be sure, guard her with the tenderest care,

Lest her distraction shou'd commit self-violence.

[Ifa. led off.]

Now dear, departed friend—'twere just, that I,
The wretch, whose crimes have been the cause of all,
Shou'd, on these clay-cold lips, breathe out my last.

Enter Officer of the guards.

Off. My lord, your pardon, but you're here a prisoner :

Your wife has, in a fit of raving frenzy,

Confess'd the murder on Sir Thomas Overbury.

Sir Gervas Ell'ways, and the rest impeach'd,

Are seiz'd—and say, the wine was sent from you.

Som. Oh ! the vile traitrefs !—guard her from my fight—

But leave me here—and let me slow expire.

Close

SIR THOMAS OVERBURY. 185

Close by the truest friend, and best of men!

Oh!—wou'd the world be warn'd by my example!

Fly, ye fond youth, the guilty fair-one's arms,
Nor judge their excellence by outward charms;
They, who, for faithless love, true friends betray,
Chuse glitt'ring toys, and throw rich pearls away.

E P I L O G U E.

WRITTEN BY AARON HILL, ESQ.

SPOKEN BY MRS. BRET,
IN THE CHARACTER OF ISABELLA.

WELL!—'tis a shameful breach, in honour's laws,
To court the credit, and betray the cause!
But, faithful to my sex—Pray ladies! hear me—
And if the poet murmurs, smile, and clear me.

He bids me say, Sir Tom was just—brave—witty!
Troth! he was e'en too good for woman's pity—
I find, by hist'ries of the poor soul's life,
He wrote that frightful poem, call'd—THE WIFE.
There, with cold rules, he damps the glow of beauty;
And fetters free-born will, by sneaking duty!
His husbands are mere tyrants—and no wonder!—
They 've natural right, he says, to keep us under.
Pleas'd—or not pleas'd—we must, it seems, lie quiet;
And rather starve to death than mend our diet!
Prompt, in obedience, wait the sovereign's motion,
And do, or suffer, with resign'd devotion!

'Tis a fine lesson, truly!—Blast Sir Thomas—
Or—keep the galling yoke of wedlock from us!
Cou'd wives but once such passive grace inherit,
Bless us!—what active husbands wou'd they merit!

E P I L O G U E.

This the fine Overbury ! whose just fate
You 've seen, to-night, dress'd out in tragic state !
He make a hero !—He attract compassion !
Heaven keep these witty husbands out of fashion !
Had he been mine, I'd paid him for his poem ;
And made him feel, what thanks we women owe him !

Though lovers please—and mine is a stark new one,
My feign'd Sir Thomas suffers, for the true one :
Bless'd be the dose, by which our match miscarry'd ;
Heavens !—how I'd hated him, had we been marry'd !

As to my errand—Ere your smiles I pray,
Thus make him mend the moral of his play :
Trust not repenting Somerfet's opinion,
Nor strive to shake our sex's fix'd dominion.
Woman does, ev'n in yielding, conquest gain ;
And man, howe'er contending, toils in vain !
Learn, ye lost things ! for disobedience hated,
To what sure suff'rings rash mens lives are fated !
Wisely be rul'd :—move on the way we draw ye—
And let due sense of power superior awe ye—
Else, will your ev'ry woe be still kept waking,
And your proud hearts, waste half an age in breaking :
Care shall corrode your thoughts—Despair invade ye !
Dangers rise round !—and horns want power to shade ye.

SEP 11 1963

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered.

! main

...and when I think of him!

one was that a new idea had been found.

1944

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